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THE

SAILOR BOY.

A NOVEL.

LANE, MINERVA-PRESS, LEADENHALL-STREET.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

SAILOR BOY.

A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

" The ſeal of Providence is ſure upon thee,
" And thou wert born for yet unheard-of wonders."

OTWAY.

" Forti nil difficile."

VOL. II.

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SAILOR BOY.

CHAP. I.

WHEN the party arrived at Covent-Garden, as only three ſeats had been kept, the mother, daughter, and Mr. Downing took poſſeſſion of the front row, and Forteſcue took the vacant place at the back of Maria, who ſeldom ſpoke, her aſſumed gaiety having given place to unuſual low ſpirits, as ſhe could not help drawing compariſons between the effeminate Downing, and the manly intrepid Forteſcue, who ſeemed ſuperior to any diſguiſe, and ever ſpoke his ſentiments without fear or reſerve; and whoſe very looks, when he retorted

upon the ſilly young man, ſhewed how much he deſpiſed him.

. Very little had paſſed between the party till the concluſion of the third act, when two young gentlemen entered the box; the one a moſt daſhing City buck, about five-and-twenty, much ſuperior to Downing in point of figure, and indeed in every other reſpect, an inordinate taſte for drinking excepted, which he gratified without the leaſt ſcruple, though his impertinence, when in liquor, generally drew him into ſcrapes he had more than once had ſerious reaſons to repent. He was now exceedingly tipſy, and, having puſhed forward, bent down to take a ſurvey of Mrs. and Miſs Bloomfield, whom he hoped he had the pleaſure of ſeeing in good health. Edward's eyes were fixed upon Maria, who bowed a cool aſſent to his queſtion, which the gentleman choſe to conſtrue into a deſign to affront him; therefore, ſwearing a tolerable round oath he ſuppoſed ſhe did not think him worthy an anſwer, "Give me leave, Sir," addreſſing Forteſcue,

Forteſcue, " to take your place; I have ſomething of conſequence to ſay to that young lady."—" I do not much underſtand this kind of etiquette, Sir," replied Edward, " though I ſhould ſuppoſe this is not a proper place for important communications; at all events, this is my birth, which I mean to keep, except I give it up to oblige a lady."

" So, ſo, what, I ſuppoſe you conſider yourſelf in the light of a ſentinel; if you are placed there, why I know the conſequence of a man's quitting his poſt. But perhaps that *little* gentleman will be more polite, for though the lady is doubly guarded, it ſhall go hard but I will diſplace one of her protectors for a few minutes;" whiſpering a requeſt that he would reſign his place in Downing's ear, who, in evident trepidation, replied, " Sir!" his head half turned, and half riſing from his ſeat, " ſomething to communicate to Miſs Bloomfield, did you ſay?"—" Preciſely ſo, Mr. Downing, therefore be expeditious in your move-

ments, as the curtain is going to riſe: what a d—d uncomfortable poſture you have choſen to debate the matter!"

Forteſcue could hardly refrain from ſmiling; but, perceiving Maria grew terrified by his overbearing inſolence, and that Downing had not courage enough to ſtand his ground, he requeſted to know whether ſhe was inclined to liſten to what this troubleſome gentleman ſeemed to have to ſay? "Not juſt now," ſhe replied, in evident agitation, fearful of occaſioning a diſpute. Downing was ſtill undecided how to act, when the laſt comer aſked Edward, how he dared put ſuch a queſtion to the young lady? The Lieutenant ſmiled while he repeated, "Dare!"—"Yes, Sir, dare, I ſay; pray who are you, my man of mettle?" "That certainly cannot concern a man of your conſequence; my dreſs has, I preſume, informed you that I have the honour to bear his Majeſty's commiſſion, as well as yourſelf, if I am to judge from the cockade I perceive in your hat; and I ſhall not remain

remain an unconcerned ſpectator, while you, or any man, attempt to diſtreſs, not to ſay inſult, this young lady."—" Me diſtreſs her! z—ds, Sir, why you never was more miſtaken; I have no ſuch intentions, I give you my word of honour. Miſs Bloomfield has known me from a child, and I only wiſh ſimply to hear from her own mouth, why her father's doors have been of late ſhut againſt me. Had I been diſcarded to have made room for a *man*, I could have forgiven the treatment I have experienced; but to know my ſuit was rejected, while ſuch a being as that," contemptuouſly eyeing Downing, " is conſidered as a favoured lover, is more, by Heavens, than I can bear."

This favoured mortal was ſeized with a very convenient fit of deafneſs; he had by degrees ſunk into his ſeat again, and had his eyes fixed upon the curtain. Such behaviour might be conſtrued into indifference or diſdain; in whatever light it however appeared to his rival, his paſſion ſeemed to increaſe. " I will not ſuffer him, by G—d I won't, to

enjoy his triumph," he continued. "I know the dear ſoul has been impoſed upon; I am convinced ſhe would not elſe have treated me with ſuch determined ſcorn; I have heard her ſay a hundred times, ſhe admired a man of ſpirit."—"I can't pretend to judge what right you may have to complain of Mr. Downing, Sir; that Miſs Bloomfield knew you when a child, may be poſſible, though appearances rather militate againſt the aſſertion; however, let that be as it may, this, as I ſaid before, is a very improper place to ſeek for an explanation; ſo I muſt entreat you will no longer interrupt that young lady's amuſement, ſince you find ſhe is not inclined to liſten to——"—"Z—ds! ſtand by, Sir," interrupted the furious gentleman, "no time like the preſent," ſhoving Forteſcue ſo forcibly while ſpeaking, that he, being quite unprepared for ſuch a ſalute, fairly ſtaggered back, and the rude conqueror inſtantly leaned forward to addreſs Miſs Bloomfield. No one could have argued with more calmneſs than Edward, particularly with

with a man in liquor; but to be thus publicly insulted, was more than he could endure; and at the moment he recovered himself, he heard a very impertinent question addressed to Maria, which increased the resentment he already felt. He therefore caught the young man by the collar of his coat, which, owing to his weight, and Fortescue's sudden jerk, gave way; by which it received a considerable rent before the gentleman measured his length across the benches.

Such a *fracas*, of course, occasioned a little bustle; but, as every voice was against the inebriated buck, he thought proper to make an immediate retreat with his companion, muttering vengeance. Maria was more distressed than ever, while her mother thanked the Lieutenant for having freed them from the importunities of one of the boldest men she had ever known.—"We must attribute the gentleman's rudeness to his situation, Madam," was his reply; reseating himself with as much composure as

if nothing had happened. "Certainly, certainly," replied the pacific Downing; "that alone prevented me from paying any attention to what he ſaid; I am always particularly cautious not to occaſion any diſturbance when I am in company with ladies." "'Tis very fortunate when people have ſo perfect a command over themſelves; beſides, Sir, you are undoubtedly a much better judge of the etiquette of public places than myſelf," obſerved the ſmiling Edward; "I only hope Mrs. and Miſs Bloomfield will excuſe my want of politeneſs, or rather my want of temper."—"You not only acted right, but very naturally, Sir," ſaid the mother; "Mr. Medmore has become intolerable ſince he entered the Militia."—"Why, gentlemen either in the Army or Navy, are but too apt to think themſelves privileged people," obſerved Downing.—"It would very ill become me, Sir, to diſpute that point with a gentleman of your diſcernment," was the reply; "and men of ſuch diſpoſitions are moſt proper to cope with each

each other; you certainly acted very right in not interfering in the buſineſs."

Diſturbed as Maria had been, ſhe could not conceal a ſmile as ſhe half turned her head; but the curtain riſing, they all directed their attention towards the ſtage. Juſt before the end of the play, Mr. Medmore's companion returned into the box, and, watching his opportunity, ſlipped a note into the hand of the Lieutenant, who, gueſſing its contents, ſilently put it into his pocket; then privately tore off the direction of a letter he had received that morning from a brother officer, giving him an account of his beloved Captain, who mended hourly, which he gave Mr. Medmore's friend, who waited in expectation of an anſwer. He did not put the ſcrap of paper into his pocket as Edward had done; but the moment he received it, he held it up to the light, anxious to learn the name of his friend's antagoniſt, and was not a little aſtoniſhed to find he was the Lieutenant Forteſcue, in whoſe praiſe all London had joined, and whom he had heard

toaſted in every company, ſince the news he had brought had tranſpired. Having examined the poſt-mark, he was convinced he could not be miſtaken; he therefore looked very ſtedfaſtly at the undaunted Edward, eaſily gueſſing how he came to be in habits of intimacy with the Bloomfield family, and wiſhed very much to have entered into converſation with him. The Lieutenant watched his looks, and ſecretly enjoyed his ſurpriſe, but would not allow him an opportunity to addreſs him.

Having waited till the concluſion of the firſt act of the Farce, he left the box, to allow his courageous friend to enter into any explanations he might think neceſſary, and to read his note, which might require an immediate anſwer;—it was very ſhort, and worded in the moſt pompous terms, demanding public excuſes, or an opportunity to chaſtiſe his inſolence the following morning, at ſix, in Hyde Park. Edward ſmiled at the bombaſt ſtyle, and gueſſed the writer was no very terrible enemy; he looked about

him

him for a few minutes, but ſaw nothing of the gentleman, therefore returned into the box, where the friend ſtill remained, and to whom he whiſpered as he paſſed him, "I ſhall be in the Park at the time appointed."—The gentleman merely bowed, and ſoon retreated, no one ſuſpecting what had been the conſequence of the little diſturbance which had occurred.

As they drove into Crutched Friars, Mrs. Bloomfield gave Forteſcue the family hiſtory of Medmore, who was the eldeſt ſon of an eminent Banker, and, but for the unfortunate propenſity he indulged, would have been a moſt agreeable young man; mentioning how long he had paid his addreſſes to Maria, by whom he had been diſcarded upon account of this low vice.—"He is yet very young," Edward obſerved, "therefore let us hope he will reform: but I think we had better not mention having ſeen him this evening to Mr. William Bloomfield."—"You are quite right, Mr. Forteſcue," cried the fond mother; "I have more than once

dreaded a quarrel between them; my ſon has rather a violent ſpirit when he is rouſed." "Why, my dear Ma'am," ſaid Downing, "it might be improper; for ſometimes the moſt trifling affairs are ſeen in a ſerious light by young men, who have not learned to govern their paſſions: indeed, I muſt ſay, Mr. Forteſcue was rather too haſty this evening. For my own part, I ſaw nothing, when I conſidered Mr. Medmore's ſituation, ſo very extraordinary in his behaviour, elſe, I give you my word, I would have ſilenced him at once."

Maria, certainly unconſcious of what ſhe did at the moment, fairly ſtarted; then, in a ſarcaſtic tone, ſaid, "I hope Mr. Forteſcue will be more upon his guard in future, and take pattern from the peaceable demeanour of Mr. Downing, who might think it very polite to ſit by, and allow ladies in company to be inſulted. For my own part, I feel myſelf exceedingly obliged to Mr. Forteſcue for having rid me of ſuch a diſagreeable tipſy creature."

"My

"My dear Miſs Bloomfield," ſaid Downing, affecting to laugh, "is it poſſible you could look upon what paſſed, in a ſerious light? I thought you had been better acquainted with Medmore's bluſtering way when in liquor. I am ſure Mrs. Bloomfield ſaw his rude behaviour in the ſame light I did; he is half a madman when he has been making too free with the bottle. I am only amazed he walked off ſo quietly, for he wiſhes to be thought a very courageous man; I have known him call a gentleman out upon more trivial occaſions, and be very ſorry for it when ſober: that is, he in general has been very fortunate in his men."—"That is as much as to ſay, Mr. Downing, he knows who he can, and who he cannot frighten. Is not that what you mean to ſay of the courageous gentleman?" cried Edward.

The carriage ſtopped in Crutched Friars before Mr. Downing replied, and no farther notice was taken of the little *fracas*; of courſe, Edward took no notice of his morn-

ing's appointment, and the evening was ſpent very agreeably. But never did Maria paſs a more ſleepleſs night; ſhe had for ſome time been endeavouring to eſteem the effeminate Downing, conſcious he was a great favourite both of her father and mother; and might perhaps have accompanied him to the altar, had ſhe never had an opportunity of drawing compariſons between him and the Lieutenant. But to look up to a mean, paltry, envious coward for protection, ſhe ſhrank with a kind of horror from the thought; and the more ſhe reflected upon his behaviour to Medmore, the more ſhe deſpiſed him, while in Forteſcue ſhe found every thing to admire: yet ſhe dared not conſider him in any other light, than as her uncle's favourite and guardian angel; beſides, he had merely treated her with that degree of politeneſs, which no inmate of her father's houſe could very well diſpenſe from.

Edward had been very much upon his guard, neither to create jealouſy nor ſuſpicion in any of the family. Maria alſo kept

kept a ſtrict watch over herſelf, as, not having ſtarted a ſingle objection when Mr. Downing was propoſed, ſhe was fearful of being thought capricious, and that ſhe had fixed her heart upon an unworthy object; ſhe therefore ſaw herſelf almoſt left without a reſource, if her uncle did not ſtand her friend, and prevail upon her father to diſmiſs a man ſhe could hardly think of with common patience. Again ſhe determined upon a ſingle life, and tried to cloſe her eyes; but the brave Lieutenant haunted her imagination; his fine manly figure, his undaunted courage ſtanding forth in her defence, while the ſneaking Downing trembled and ſhrank at the ſight of a drunken man. She was convinced ſuch a being could not render any woman happy; therefore ſhe in vain courted that god, who ſeldom ſheds his poppies but upon the eyelids of the happy, and roſe as unrefreſhed as ſhe had retired.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

BY mere chance Edward happened to be provided with a brace of piſtols, and a proper quantity of ammunition; Captain Bloomfield having lent him thoſe he generally travelled with, which he conſidered a neceſſary precaution in England. He therefore ſlept very ſoundly till a quarter after five, when, perceiving it was broad daylight, he ſtarted up the moment he recollected his engagement; ſeeing the hour, and knowing he was at no ſmall diſtance from the Park, he hurried on his cloaths, caught up his defenſive weapons, which he had put ready before he went to bed, and ſtole ſoftly down ſtairs. Having awoke a ſervant who ſlept in the paſſage,

paſſage, he got him to let him out as quietly as poſſible, alledging an engagement at ſome diſtance obliged him to ſet off ſo early, telling the man he was ſorry he had diſturbed him, and putting half-a-crown into his hand, which perfectly conſoled him. He haſtened as much as poſſible towards the place of appointment, when fortunately, at the door of a public-houſe, there ſtood a hackney-coach, a thing he did not expect to meet with at that time of the morning, nor would he have thought to have put the queſtion, if the driver, ſeeing him in ſuch haſte, had not hailed him, and enquired if he had not better ride. "With all my heart," he replied, and, jumping in, deſired the man to make the beſt of his way to Hyde Park, promiſing him a double allowance if he did his beſt. The temptation had the deſired effect, and he had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing, by the clock at the turnpike gate, that it wanted ſeven minutes to ſix when he arrived.

He

He immediately walked forward, but ſaw no one who reſembled his antagoniſt. "I needed not have been in ſuch a hurry," thought he; yet was happy he was rather before than after his time. But on looking round him, and ſeeing how extenſive the Park was, it was very probable, he thought, he might miſs the gentleman he was come in queſt of. There were very few people walking at that time of the morning; Medmore certainly meant to make his appearance, though, having been ſo tipſy over night, he might alſo overſleep himſelf. He had heard of there being a particular ſpot made uſe of upon ſuch occaſions, and enquired of the firſt perſon he met, the way to the Ring. It was inſtantly pointed out to him, and thither he bent his ſteps with the ſame ſpeed he had left home; but having arrived near enough to perceive no perſon was in waiting, he ſlackened his pace, and began to reflect that he might be haſtening to the concluſion of his glorious career. Well, if he did fall in this *rencontre*, he ſhould be ſpared appearing at

St.

St. James's, the thoughts of which had given him more unpleaſant ſenſations, conſcious of his own deficiencies, than the idea of meeting Medmore. He however conſoled himſelf with that idea, and that he ſhould leave but few people to lament his loſs, as he was but very little known; he therefore merely wrote a few lines in his pocket-book with his pencil, addreſſed to his benefactor, and had ſcarcely finiſhed, before he heard the neighbouring clocks ſtriking ſix; and in a minute after, upon looking every way with increaſing impatience, he perceived three gentlemen advancing from another entrance, among whom he ſoon diſtinguiſhed Medmore and his friend: he therefore walked towards them. As he was dreſſed exactly the ſame as over night, they as readily recognized his perſon; and when near enough, Medmore exclaimed, extending his hand at the ſame time, "Lieutenant Forteſcue, I am d—d ſorry I diſturbed you ſo early this morning; I am always a c—ſ—d fooliſh fellow in liquor: but I poſitively drink to baniſh

baniſh that faſcinating little Gipſy, Miſs Bloomfield, from my mind. I was juſt in a humour laſt night to have cut any man's throat, who dares aſpire to the happineſs of poſſeſſing ſuch a treaſure. I know you have not ſwelled the liſt of her admirers; it was that d—d ſneaking puppy, by the ſide of the lovely creature, I meant to affront, for he ſhall not have her, d—mme, while I have breath to aſſert my rights. Mine is a prior claim; I was received at her father's houſe with—— But what the devil does it ſignify to you? Come, perhaps you will put me out of my miſery at once; though had I known, as I have been telling my friends, who you were, when we ſo accidentally met, I ſhould much ſooner have ſought your friendſhip than your life. Where is your ſecond?"—"You have got two, Captain," replied Edward to this well-connected harangue, "therefore you can ſpare me one: but, you muſt know, I really thought you had been making excuſes all this time."—"Who, me, Lieutenant—me make excuſes?

Oh

Oh no! I never yet made excuſes upon ſuch an occaſion, nor never intend to do it; I am certainly ſorry you are my antagoniſt; indeed, I had now as lieve put a piſtol to my own fooliſh head, as run the riſk of depriving my country of ſo diſtinguiſhed and ſo brave an officer."—"A truce to unmeaning compliments, if you pleaſe, Captain; if you intend to make excuſes, I am willing to accept them; if not, let us decide the buſineſs at once. You ſay it is no matter how ſoon you are out of the world; I therefore preſume you have ſettled all your worldly affairs. I have been writing my will ſince I have been in the Park; for I made it late laſt night before I retired, ſo had not time then, and this morning I overſlept myſelf; but fortunately a ſailor's accounts are ſoon ſettled."—"You are a droll, d—d hearty fellow," replied the Captain, attempting to laugh; "but ſince we are to make uſe of our piſtols, you muſt poſitively procure a ſecond, for I ſhould not be ſure elſe, whether I might not endanger my own neck,

neck, if I was to be ſo unfortunate as to wound you, which God forbid!"—"Be under no fears upon my account," interrupted Edward, who, perceiving ſome ſoldiers at a diſtance, beckoned one of them to approach, adding, "The very man, of all others, for the purpoſe."

Medmore's companions, who had hitherto remained neuter, now interfered, declaring themſelves very deſirous to accommodate matters. Captain Medmore's courage was well known, and it was evident he had no intention to affront Lieutenant Forteſcue, of whoſe intrepidity no one could entertain a doubt; and they truſted he would make ſome allowance for a man in love, who was driven to deſpair by ſeeing a rival obtain that preference he once enjoyed and ſtill ſolicited. The Captain ſwore if he did not fight the Lieutenant, he muſt draw a trigger with Downing, whom he neither could nor would ſuffer to carry off ſuch a jewel; he muſt either ſpill his blood, or loſe a little of his own.—"Now don't talk like a madman

man this morning, now you are ſober," ſaid one of his companions; during which the ſoldier had drawn near. The bluſtering buck, being inclined to make any conceſſions rather than fight, put half-a-crown piece into the hand of the ſoldier, ſaying, "You are no longer wanted, my friend;" and made him a ſign at the ſame time to retreat. The ſoldier's back turned, the Captain faced about, ſaying, "Lieutenant Forteſcue, I am d—d ſorry, upon my ſoul, I have given you ſo much trouble. I was too much in liquor laſt night to know what I was about, that is the truth; and I can't find in my heart to level a bullet at you, for treating me exactly as I ſhould have done you, had I been in your place, though you are the only man in England to whom I would have made ſuch an acknowledgment: but I honour a hero as much as I do a monarch, and you will not divulge my folly. D—mme, if I had challenged Downing, he would have ſent the Peace-Officers after me; but don't be ſurpriſed if you ſhould hear I have left England;—I

ſhall

ſhall certainly either ſet off for the Continent, or the other world; for, by the Lord Harry, the ſame world ſhall not long contain Downing and me!"—"I am much leſs acquainted with your pretenſions to Miſs Bloomfield's favour, than I am with your bravery, Captain," was the reply; which the perſon to whom it was addreſſed, took for a very fine compliment. Therefore, again extending his hand, he ſaid, "Thank Heaven, my honour was never called in queſtion. This is not the firſt affair of the kind I have been engaged in; that my friends there know, and few of them have terminated thus amicably."—Edward readily took the proffered hand; he was perfectly ſatisfied the Captain had no intention to affront him; he therefore wiſhed him and the other gentlemen a very good morning.—"Hold, we do not part thus abruptly neither, Lieutenant; we will all leave the Park together; I truſt you will in future conſider me as your friend, therefore do me the favour to breakfaſt with me at the —— Coffee-Houſe. Come, Doctor,

Doctor, since we have not afforded you an opportunity of displaying your skill in extracting balls, you shall be of the party."

Edward could not restrain a smile when he discovered the precautions his antagonist had taken, whose companions appeared to have no will of their own, while Forteſcue begged to be excused attending, as he was expected to breakfast in Crutched Friars.

"What, Sir, are you upon a visit at Mr. Bloomfield's?" asked the Captain.—"I certainly am, Sir. You may probably have heard I have long been under the protection of his brother. I only hope you have not already repented having scrupled to endanger my life, as, though I am not at present your rival, I can't pretend to answer for what may happen, as I have ever been a very great admirer of the fair sex, and Miss Bloomfield poſſeſſes charms that might warm the most savage heart."—"Z—ds, Sir! don't mention the little Gipsy; I only hope your stay will be short," replied the now jocular Captain; "though if I am doomed to

reſign my pretenſions in favour of any other, I ſhould feel half conſoled when I conſidered it was in favour of one of the braveſt men Great-Britain now reckons among her defenders. D—mme if I don't believe I ſhould applaud her choice!"—"Not if you were aware, Captain, that my pay compriſes my whole fortune, and that I am a ſort of inſular being, who muſt riſe or fall according to my own merit or Fortune's caprice. You may therefore reſt aſſured, I ſhall ever content myſelf with wiſhing a man truly deſerving ſuch a woman, may fall to the ſhare of Miſs Bloomfield; as I ſhould conſider the moſt remote attempt to obtain her affection, as the very height of ingratitude towards my benefactor, her worthy uncle. I am thus explicit, leſt you ſhould ſuppoſe any other motive than regard for every branch of her family, induced me to involve myſelf in a quarrel that properly belonged to her avowed lover: but as he did not ſtep forward, perhaps from praiſeworthy motives, I thought it neceſſary to run

run the riſk of appearing officious."—This kind of diſcourſe brought them to the upper end of St. James's-Street, where, notwithſtanding the Captain's entreaties that he would favour them with his company at breakfaſt, Edward wiſhed the whole party a good morning, and reached Crutched Friars before any of the family were ſtirring.

He therefore met them at breakfaſt without ever mentioning having been out; and then, having made himſelf as ſmart as his wardrobe would admit, he drove to the Admiralty in his friend William's chariot, who gaily obſerved, he muſt at leaſt have clean ſhoes upon ſuch an occaſion. From thence he proceeded to St. James's with Lord ——, by whom he was preſented to his Royal Maſter, who gave him a moſt flattering and truly gracious reception, telling him, if all his Officers were equally brave and fortunate, he ſhould ſoon clear the ſeas of his enemies; it was but juſt, however, he ſhould benefit by the eſſential ſervice he had done his country; in conſequence of which

he appointed him to the command of the ſhip he had ſo glorioufly won, which he was informed would ſoon be in a ſtate to go out again. Her conſort he ſhould reſerve for Captain Bloomfield, after whom he enquired with infinite condeſcenſion, declaring the health of ſuch men became a national concern.

Edward, unprepared for ſuch marks of the Royal favour, was unable to expreſs his thanks as he would have wiſhed. Indeed, the idea of being ſeparated from his beloved Captain Bloomfield, put a ſerious damp upon the joy his unexpected promotion occaſioned him; as he would have almoſt rather continued Captain Bloomfield's Firſt Lieutenant, than have obtained the command of the New Prince of Wales; for now it was he began to doubt his own abilities and want of experience: he certainly had ſeen ſervice, but there was a vaſt difference between acting under the orders of another, and being accountable for every thing done on board a man of war. This diffidence

was

was becoming in ſo young a man; and before he left St. James's, he received the congratulations of every one preſent. Indeed the levee was rather crowded, as he had been expected to make his appearance, and little elſe except his brilliant exploits had been talked of, from the moment the news he had brought had been publiſhed.

The noble Lord who had introduced him, and had told him his uniform would do perfectly well to appear in even at Court, now remarked he had his reaſons for not allowing him time to give his orders to his tailor; and ſince he had been at St. James's, he had learned it was particularly fortunate he had given him that caution, congratulating him upon the peaceable termination of his morning's adventure, adding, he ought to remember his life was become of too much conſequence to his country, to be lightly expoſed in any private quarrel. The Sheriff, who thought his own conſequence increaſed by diſplaying his intimacy with the highly honoured young man, was very much ſur-

priſed; and as ſoon as Lord ——, having told the youthful Captain it would be proper he ſhould again make his appearance in the circle when he was properly equipped, appointing that day week for his ſecond preſentation, deſiring to ſee him at the Admiralty the next, had retired, he enquired what private quarrel or adventure his Lordſhip had alluded to?—To account for its having reached the circle ſo ſoon, we muſt obſerve, Captain Medmore, fearful the affair might tranſpire, had thought proper to tell the ſtory himſelf at the Coffee-houſe where he and his friends had breakfaſted, declaring, but for his ſecond, who was ready to ſay or ſwear to any thing the Captain advanced, he ſhould certainly have drawn a trigger, though he acknowledged he was the aggreſſor, and the Lieutenant had behaved like the man of honour he was known to be. The Captain's conduct at the play had been very ſeverely cenſured, and it would probably have been ſtill more ſo, had the public really known what had paſſed in the Park: but

but he had to do with too generous an antagoniſt to have his puſillanimity made public, as Forteſcue rather pitied than blamed him. During their drive home, he entered into a few neceſſary details reſpecting their quarrel to the Sheriff, who declared himſelf very much obliged to him for having reſented the affront intended his daughter; adding, ſhe had very properly, and with his full approbation, rejected the ſuit of Captain Medmore;—Mr. Downing certainly ought to have prevented the neceſſity of Captain Forteſcue's interference; he could only ſuppoſe he did not ſee Medmore's behaviour in ſo ſtrong a light; he was indeed remarkable for his placability, therefore the more likely to make a woman happy. Of that Forteſcue ſuppoſed Miſs Bloomfield muſt be the beſt judge; and, having nothing to ſay in defence of Downing, he thought it moſt prudent to remain ſilent; while Mr. Bloomfield thought it rather neceſſary to enter into a few details reſpecting

Downing, purpoſely to convince Forteſcue he was a man of wealth if not of courage.

The moment they reached home, the Sheriff gaily introduced Captain Forteſcue to his wife, ſon, and daughter, relating, with no ſmall degree of ſelf-exultation, the gracious reception his brother's *protégé* had met with. William's looks expreſſed his heartfelt joy; he was convinced he ſhould ſee his dear friend an Admiral. Maria, whoſe ſparkling eyes evinced her ſatisfaction, joined in the wiſhes of all the family, that he might live to a good old age, to reap new laurels for the benefit of his country, when called upon to defend her laws and liberty.

The Sheriff next thought it neceſſary to mention Forteſcue's morning *rencontre* with Medmore. Maria's colour forſook her cheeks, and ſhe turned to one of the windows to conceal her agitation; while William declared he would learn to fire at a mark, to be able to chaſtiſe ſuch impudent boaſting fellows, highly applauding his generous friend's conduct, who had given Medmore a leſſon he foreſaw

foreſaw would be of ſervice to him as long as he lived.

Though Mr. Bloomfield was ſecretly hurt at the puſillanimity Downing had betrayed, he endeavoured to find excuſes for his conduct; but Maria felt her former indifference now amounted to averſion. Had he made his appearance at this unfortunate juncture, 'tis a chance if he had ever been tempted to renew his viſits, as both brother and ſiſter would probably have convinced him they deſpiſed him for his want of ſpirit, as much as they now both admired the gallant Forteſcue, whom even the elder Mr. Bloomfield wiſhed was a man of family and fortune, particularly the latter; for he could not help thinking he was a very fine young man, and was far more likely to do honour to, than diſgrace his friends.

CHAP. III.

CAPTAIN BLOOMFIELD continued in a ſtate of progreſſive convaleſcence; he therefore hoped ſoon to be able to bear the fatigue of travelling. He had wrote a ſecond letter to the Lords of the Admiralty in behalf of his beloved Edward, and rejoiced with even paternal feeling, when he learned he was appointed to the command of the new Prince of Wales, foreſeeing he would not ſtop ſhort in the career of glory.

The day after he had been preſented to his Sovereign, Edward received his commiſſion from the Board, and was told orders had been ſent down to Plymouth, to have his ſhip got ready for ſea with all poſſible expedition,

expedition, as ſhe was to be ſent with ſtores to the Grand Fleet in the Mediterranean; he would therefore not be allowed to ſpend more than three weeks, or a month at fartheſt, in London, during which he muſt tranſmit his orders in writing to his officers, ſome of whom he was permitted to nominate; and was aſſured every man who had ſo bravely diſtinguiſhed himſelf under his command before, ſhould go out with him again.

The expreſs from the Admiralty brought the firſt news of Forteſcue's promotion to Plymouth. Captain Bloomfield immediately diſpatched an expreſs with his congratulations, aſſuring him the ſhip's crew were ſcarcely leſs delighted, and were all anxious to hail their new Commander; he hoped, however, to be in Crutched Friars before he left London, as he thought every day an age while they remained at ſuch a diſtance.

Edward, in anſwer, proteſted the idea of their approaching ſeparation had greatly damped the joy his promotion had given

him; promiſing, however, to continue to deſerve his benefactor's eſteem, and the favour of his Monarch; as he would rather die than tarniſh that reputation he owed to the experience of his worthy friend and protector.

Nor could the alluring pleaſures of the metropolis keep him a moment from his duty; he daily attended the Admiralty, and made every neceſſary preparation for his intended voyage: he therefore ſaw but very little of either Maria or her lover. But on the Saturday week after his arrival in London, the Sheriff propoſed ſpending the following day at Weſton, rather out of compliment to the young hero, who had expreſſed a wiſh to his friend William of viſiting his father's country-houſe once more, in the old gentleman's hearing. It may, therefore, readily be ſuppoſed Edward made no objection to the propoſal. Mr. Mrs. and Miſs Bloomfield left London the ſame evening; but the young men having buſineſs that would detain them late in town, it was

agreed they ſhould ride down to Weſton in the morning; and accordingly ſet out about twelve o'clock. Edward, though by no means a bad horſeman, frequently laughed at his own awkwardneſs as they proceeded, obſerving, it would be fortunate if he reached the port without running his horſe upon a lee ſhore. Nothing, however, occurred till they arrived at a village, about four miles from town, where they perceived a large crowd aſſembled on one ſide of the road.

"Has any ſailor been unhorſed yonder, I wonder?" cried the Captain.

"We ſhall ſoon diſcover," replied William, "and muſt take him in tow, if we can get him off; but if I could guide a ſhip as well as you can ride, I ſhould not be afraid of being ſwamped."

In a few ſeconds they diſtinguiſhed a gentleman in black, exalted upon a table about four feet ſquare, haranguing the aſſembled multitude.

"Oh,

"Oh, now I perceive which way the land lies," cried Edward.—"This is the Chaplain of the village, I ſuppoſe, ſummoning all hands to prayers; ſo let us heave to, and benefit by his godly intentions; for I have not been able to attend to that part of my duty ſince I have been on *terra firma*; though I never enjoyed my prayers ſo much as during our thankſgiving after our late ſucceſs."

They turned a few yards out of the road, and pulled up in the background, to the terror of ſome ladies, who could not bear to have ſuch dangerous animals near them;—but Edward aſſured them they had nothing to fear; he would keep ſufficiently aloof;—though they muſt be in a very proper ſtate of mind, in caſe an accident did befal them. Then liſtening to the preacher, and looking at him very ſtedfaſtly for a few ſeconds, he ſaid to William—

"Surely I have ſeen that Reverend gentleman before."

"You

"You have an excellent memory," replied William; "for I believe you are right in your conjectures."

"Oh, I cannot be miſtaken; it is the young lawyer, and would-be Parſon, who was ſtudying oratory or divinity under the cobbler at Weſton when I was laſt there;—but he ſeems to be a preaching trotter now."

"The very man," ſaid William; "and you perceive he has roſe in the world."

"Why he is certainly higher than his congregation. Has he been ordained, pray, after trotting his terms?"

"No, elſe he would be very unfit for his preſent calling. He did make the uſual application, I heard, to the Biſhop for that honour; but he did not trot faſt enough to render him a ſufficient proficient in his ſtudies: beſides, his having been under the cobbler's tuition was no recommendation.—In ſhort, to the great amazement of his learned preceptor and family, and the no ſmall rage of ſome of his moſt ſtrenuous ad-

mirers, he was abſolutely rejected; and they adviſed him, by way of being revenged on the Right Reverend Father in God, who could be actuated by nothing but prejudice, to preach in ſpite of him; the ſon of Criſpin undertaking to raze all the pious young man's ſcruples. So thus ſelf, or cobbler ordained, he began his religious career with, I am told, infinite ſucceſs; and now preaches daily in various villages, and has actually a chapel building, where he means to aſtoniſh his auditors with the brilliancy of thoſe talents the Right Reverend Father in God choſe to overlook or devote to obſcurity.—How far he may have ſucceeded in annoying that gentleman, I cannot inform you; I only know many people at Weſton declare him inſpired, and he certainly aſſembles a crowd wherever he holds forth; but whether curioſity or religion brings the generality, I ſhall not take upon me to decide. A vaſt many pence, I am told, are collected wherever he chuſes to pitch his tent, and which he as conſtantly diſtributes among the poor

poor and needy. 'Giving to the poor is lending to the Lord;' he therefore never fails to impreſs this doctrine very ſtrongly upon their minds. His enemies ſay charity begins at home; they have never heard of any one that benefited by his collections."

"Oh, the fellow is like all other mountebanks," replied the Captain. "It is an eaſy matter to collect a crowd to gape.—And as for his keeping the fools' money, I think he acts right; but do let's try if we can't get a little nearer; I want to have a ſpecimen of his eloquence."

They rode up as near as they could, and liſtened attentively. His ranting appeared to have a wonderful effect upon the audience: ſome raiſed their eyes to Heaven; others lowered their's as moſt humble. Some hid their faces with their handkerchiefs; others ſobbed, nay, even wept aloud; and ſighs and groans were re-echoed on all ſides.—Looking at William with ſome ſurpriſe—

"Are theſe people really thus affected," ſaid Edward; "or are their feelings aſſumed?

aſſumed? for I am a perfect ſtranger to this kind of religious worſhip. On board a man of war ſilence always prevails during divine ſervice; but we are all as cheerful during that part of our duty as while we are fighting for our King and country, which ſailors look upon ſerving their Maker, though with a trifling difference; but I own I can't comprehend theſe land medleys."

"I am afraid you ſailors will never be taught the beauties of the new doctrine," replied William.—"I pity your want of faith as much as Seldon doubtleſs does; for he avers good works are of no avail: but ſilence, or we ſhall be called to order."

Some of the pious ſet were indeed loud in their murmurs, and wiſhed theſe ungodly intruders would purſue their journey, and not come to diſturb their devotion. The orator made a full ſtop, having totally exhauſted his breath. He took the opportunity to wipe the foam from his mouth, and again began in a more humble ſtrain.

"The

"The greater part of my preſent audience have already taſted the divine grace; let us now pray for thoſe more hardened ſinners who have not been yet ſo fortunate, and whom we moſt cordially invite to the heavenly feaſt."

A very ſtout young man, well dreſſed, who had been attending more to what paſſed between Edward and William, than the would-be divine, bawled out—

"Now I ſhall be included in your prayers, Maſter Seldon."

The preacher took no notice, but claſping his hands, he raiſed his eyes, and appeared inwardly convulſed for a few ſeconds.—Then broke forth—

"Behold, my brethren, the wonders of the creation; from thence our Saviour deſcended to take our ſins upon himſelf; but remember, ye muſt all be born again, be regenerated, before ye can be ſaved."

"Z——ds! what, all to be born again?" interrupted the former ſpeaker.

"Yes,

"Yes, it muſt be even ſo, before ye can enter the kingdom of Heaven," replied Seldon.—"I will make it as——"

"The Lord have mercy upon my poor old mother!" cried the ſame fellow.—"I don't want to hear any more. Oh! I ſhall be the death of her at laſt; ſhe has often told me I ſhould."

This witty ſpeech amuſed ſome, and vexed others of the congregation. The ſelf-created divine took ſome pains to reform his morals, or rather his religious principles; and the cawing of a rook in an adjoining tree was transformed by Seldon into the warning voice of an evil ſpirit, meant to announce his perdition, if he did not turn from his wickedneſs, and repent.

"Why, thou impious wretch," cried the enraged Forteſcue, "how dare you hold ſuch blaſphemous language? Can any one preſent ſuppoſe ſuch a being as that can deal out ſalvation, or the reverſe at will?—Had your prophecy been addreſſed to me,

Mr.

Mr. Seldon, I would ſoon have brought you from your elevated ſituation."

A general ſilence enſued, as Forteſcue's ſpeech had its due effect upon the deluded multitude, till the orator, with evident fear and trembling, began again.

"Avaunt, Satan! I defy thee, and all thy works! Liſten, I ſay, to the lively call of the birds, my righteous flock, and be not ſeduced from your duty by the deceiver of old, charm he never ſo wiſely. Hearken to the innocent, ſportive lambkins; how do we know but the ill-omened owls and crows are not ſent as tokens of divine diſpleaſure? Let us therefore mend our lives, leſt, inſtead of being greeted with the melodious ſong of the nightingale, our ears are ſaluted by the ſcreams of the ſcreech-owl. Such was my meaning, which that ſtranger choſe to miſinterpret; but his is the profeſſion of arms, mine of peace. I endeavour to ſave your ſouls, to teach you to aſpire to ſomething far above——"

At

At this moment, either through increaſing trepidation, or awkwardneſs, he ſtepped on one ſide of his roſtrum, and fell to the ground. A ſhort young man burſt into a loud laugh, crying—

"Why, you can't maintain your own ſtation above, Maſter, much more teach us to go aloft;"—(he was the mate of a merchantman whom Edward recollected having ſeen in Jamaica;)"ſo I will e'en find ſome better pilot to teach me the road to Heaven, without ſo much palaver. Teach your ſet firſt to be honeſt, ſay I, and raiſe him who will to his exalted ſtation," walking out of the crowd very calmly, adding, "you are all *hipocriples* alike."

What with the preacher's misfortune, and the ſailor's ſpeech, the two friends rode on, hardly able to ſit their horſes for laughing; but had not proceeded more than five hundred yards before they met a large party of ladies on foot, hurrying along, as if going upon buſineſs of the greateſt importance, at the head of which, with a paſtoral crook in her hand, Edward

ſoon

ſoon recognized the pious lady, who had even taught her parrot to ſing pſalms. Her daughters were ſtill ſingle;—and as William was ſuppoſed to have ſowed ſome of his wild oats, ſhe had hopes of forming a connexion between him and her eldeſt daughter. She therefore ſtopped ſhort upon perceiving him advancing, and after a vaſt many compliments and congratulations to the naval hero, ſhe informed them ſhe had had the misfortune to be diſappointed reſpecting a carriage; but ſhe had braved the fatigue of a very long walk, rather than miſs a diſcourſe of that worthy good ſoul, Mr. John Seldon, but was afraid they ſhould be too late; had he ſeen the congregation aſſembled as he came through?

William, with as grave a look as he could aſſume, was ſorry to inform her the gentleman whom ſhe was ſo anxious to hear, and whom his friend and he had been liſtening to for ſome time, had unfortunately fallen off his table; but whether in a fit, or from whatever motive, he could not tell, the crowd being ſo great: but he feared the holy man

man would be prevented from deſcanting any longer upon the vanity of all ſublunary things, at leaſt for the day. The good lady was ſhocked beyond meaſure; ſhe muſt haſten forward to ſee he had proper advice, in caſe he had ſuſtained any injury—too great an exertion, perhaps. He certainly has not his fellow for *extempore* preaching in the three kingdoms; therefore, followed by her whole party, eight in number, after a curtſey from each, and a few ſmiles beſtowed upon the young men, they buſtled forward, and having had their laugh out—

"In the name of charity," ſaid Edward, "why don't that old ſanctified matron beſtow her eldeſt daughter upon the man ſhe is ſo fond of, and who would be ſure to ſave the ſouls of all thoſe connected with her?—I ſhould then think her in earneſt, and Seldon would have preached to ſome purpoſe, by your account: he would alſo ſave the old woman's lungs, by officiating as her domeſtic chaplain. What a number of advantages I could point out to her!"

"I one

"I one day, my dear friend, made ſome of the ſame remarks you have, to my father," was the reply, "who ſaid, that old woman, with all her canting hypocriſy, and religious pretenſions, would rather marry her daughters to rich rakes than poor ſaints;—for, like the reſt of her fanatic ſet, ſhe makes her ſanctity a cloak for her vices."

"Then I begin to fancy the ſailor was not much out. What a ſhocking ſet!" rejoined the Captain.—"Surely theſe itinerant preachers ſhould not be ſuffered to miſlead the credulous, and delude the ignorant. I only wiſh the heads of the Church of England would join as heartily in the cauſe of that pure religion which they revere, as we ſailors do in the cauſe of our country's laws and freedom—that is, follow the example of the noble Lord Biſhop who refuſed to ordain Seldon, and I warrant me they would extirpate thoſe hypocritical enthuſiaſts as ſoon as we ſhall the new Republicans' falſe doctrine."

The Sheriff and his daughter met the young men at the entrance of Weſton; and Edward was flattered by the reception they gave him, though he could not help fancying Maria always appeared under ſome reſtraint in his company. He and William diſmounted, and leading their horſes, proceeded on foot towards the houſe, relating their adventures upon the road;—but when they mentioned the diſappointment the godly lady had met with reſpecting a carriage, Maria laughed very heartily, obſerving, ſhe might juſtly ſay ſhe had been diſappointed of her ride, though a coach certainly was at her door at the time appointed, to convey them to meeting, and the coachman had ſuffered ſix to take poſſeſſion of it without murmuring; but when he ſaw two more preparing to aſcend the ſtep, he put a negative upon their intention, which brought on a long and warm diſpute, that ended in the man's proteſting he would take none of them; "and he actually,

actually, my maid informed me, forced those who were already seated, to quit the carriage, and drove home again, leaving them to proceed to —— how and as they could."

"They were very properly treated," said the Sheriff.—"I commend the fellow's spirit."

"What think you of this specimen of the good lady's humanity?" asked William, laughing at his friend.

"If such are the fruits of pretended zeal," was the reply, "I only wish such canting, whining hypocrites may always meet with such treatment."

CHAP. IV.

HAVING paid their reſpects to Mrs. Bloomfield, and taken ſome refreſhment, the young men took the turn of the green with the Sheriff and Maria. There had not been many changes ſince the laſt viſit the Captain had paid Weſton, but he could not help obſerving William's eyes were always ſtraying towards Mrs. Beaver's: he therefore, watching an opportunity, in a whiſper demanded if that lady's houſe contained the divinity who held him in thraldom. A ſignificant look was all the reply he received; it was affirmative, and made Edward ſmile;—but as they were entering the Sheriff's gate, William gave him a pinch, which induced him

him to turn his head juſt in time to ſee Mrs. Beaver, followed by a tall, elegant young woman, enter her own houſe. As ſoon as he found an opportunity, he gave him credit for his choice, enquiring who ſhe was.

"Upon my honour I can't inform you.—I have only been in her company twice, and never have been introduced to her; and, from my private enquiries, I have merely learned ſhe is niece to the old lady ſhe reſides with; of courſe not very rich, I ſhould ſuppoſe, though that I have not been able to diſcover:—and I might as well think of going to heaven through Seldon's prayers, as think of marrying, without my father's conſent, a woman without a fortune. But ſhe is come to make ſome ſtay at Mrs.——'s, her aunt; therefore, when we remove hither for the ſummer, I will be at the bottom of all I want to know. I hope my ſiſter and ſhe will get acquainted. Indeed ſhe muſt, to oblige me; Maria loves her brother, and can keep a ſecret, if I am

obliged to put her into my confidence, to facilitate my ſcheme."

"Well, I can only wiſh you ſucceſs and a fair wind when you do ſet ſail for the land of matrimony," replied the Captain, as they returned to their company; when, in leſs than two minutes, to their infinite joy, and no ſmall ſurpriſe, Captain Bloomfield drove up to the door. It would be difficult to ſay who appeared moſt eager to welcome him, though none were ſo truly happy as Edward to ſee him ſo much recovered, and to find he had borne his late journey remarkably well. Dinner was announced before the welcomes were half over: the Captain therefore told the overjoyed Forteſcue that he would be able to judge how hearty he was grown, as his only complaint, for the laſt four days, had been a very ravenous appetite. When the cloth was removed, he began to joke with his niece reſpecting her approaching marriage; as, from the Sheriff's late letters, he preſumed ſhe was on the eve of diſpoſing of her

her liberty, and declared his wiſh to ſee the bridegroom elect.

Maria was thrown into the greateſt confuſion; her colour varied every moment, and her tongue faltered when ſhe attempted to reply. Her uncle, ſeeing he had diſtreſſed her, without thinking, reverted to the approaching departure of his favourite pupil; adding, a ſailor's life in time of war was not very enviable. Maria ſighed while ſhe juſt raiſed her eyes to take one glance of the object which occupied all her thoughts at that moment.

Forteſcue, who little thought what paſſed in the beautiful girl's mind, and would have given worlds to have made her happy, gaily ſaid, a ſailor's life was ſtill leſs enviable in time of peace, as many of them muſt be very much at a loſs how to employ their days.

"I will be bound, Edward, you will never be idle," was the reply, "at home or abroad; for I dare ſay you will be making love when you have no more ſerious employment.

During the laſt fortnight you have been too buſily employed to look out for a wife to ſhare your bluſhing honours."

"I muſt gain a little more prize-money, my dear Sir, before I think of matrimony; therefore, by that time, I ſhall certainly act with prudence; and you may reſt aſſured, whenever I do ſet about ſo ſerious an affair, I will not proceed far before I conſult my beſt friend. Indeed your approbation is become neceſſary to my very exiſtence; for who ever met with ſuch a friend as you have been to me? To you I owe my very life, the little merit I poſſeſs, the opportunity I have had of diſtinguiſhing myſelf, and of courſe my late promotion.—Never, never, my more than father, can the grateful Edward repay one-tenth part of the obligations you have conferred upon him. He can only promiſe never to diſgrace your patronage; and he truſts the time will come when, without breaking the promiſe he long ſince impoſed upon himſelf, he may convince his benefactor his favour has not been laviſhed upon a very ignoble object."

Maria

Maria had been all ears; and the laſt phraſe gave the moſt unſpeakable delight to her throbbing heart, while a gleam of joy beamed from her expreſſive eyes. Mrs. Bloomfield had long wiſhed to know who he really was; nor was the Sheriff now much leſs anxious. William was the leaſt curious of the party; he loved his friend, and that was enough: but while they all remained looking with admiration upon the grateful young man, the Captain ſtarted from his chair, and caught him in his arms, declaring he ſhould always conſider him as his ſon—renumerating to the company, in his turn, the various proofs of attachment he had received from his beloved Edward, who had ſaved his life more than once.—"But enough of the ſubject," he continued, as he reſumed his ſeat.—"Do you, young folks, go and take a ſhort walk before the evening cloſes in; it will do you good, and henceforth, Maria and William, let me hope you will conſider my boy as your couſin."

The former curtſied her acquieſcence, while William declared he joyfully acknowledged the relationſhip. Mrs. Bloomfield retired at the ſame time, thinking the brothers might have ſome private matters to diſcuſs, that even her huſband might not wiſh her to hear. As ſoon as they were *téte-à-téte*—"I was in hopes," ſaid the Sheriff, "Edward was going to elucidate the myſtery which has hitherto hung over him."

"I own I was of the ſame opinion," was the reply.—"But never mind, brother; he is evidently, as he hinted, of no ignoble race, or he would not have even hinted what he did; and I commend him for having perſevered in a ſilence which muſt at times have been very difficult to maintain. His motives muſt be juſt: at all events, he is a moſt glorious young man. I never knew him ſay or do a thing that was not ſtrictly juſtifiable; and he always ſpurned at a mean or malicious action, by which means he has gained the eſteem of all who know him."

"Do

"Do you think, brother, his name is really Forteſcue?"

"I dare ſay it is."

"But is it not ſtrange he ſhould have been promoted to ſuch a rank, and ſo ſuddenly? while I know it is in general believed he is your ſon."

"And what has that to do with his talents and bravery? I ſhould take it as a compliment in that caſe; for I wiſh, in my heart, he really was what the world in general ſuppoſe. And perhaps, brother, you are of the world's opinion? but, on my honour, I am as ignorant of his origin as you are; and whatever may have been the motives of thoſe who promoted him, he is certainly entitled to the diſtinction through his ſkill and bravery, which are, as they ever ought to be, the greateſt recommendation to Royal favour. He was entitled to the ſhip he ſo glorioufly won, and which he will not part with but with his life, I am convinced, if he meets with an enemy;—but as I have already obſerved, I know not who he is; a man of family I have ever ſuppoſed, from the firſt

moment of our meeting—perhaps, at this inſtant, labouring under misfortunes; yet I do not think he is in correſpondence with any one. Perhaps adverſity may have made him what he is: ſerious reflection may form the man of enterpriſe."

"Ah! brother, I am afraid there is as much raſhneſs as courage in his diſpoſition; one is often miſtaken for the other."

"I allow what you ſay to be right in many reſpects," replied the Captain.—"Raſhneſs and courage are ſo nearly allied, that I have often been at a loſs myſelf how to make the diſtinction; but have ever been of opinion, that to form a great man, he muſt have a ſtrong ſpice of both in his compoſition. Succeſs is ſure to be eſteemed courage by ſome; *vice verſa*, a bold attempt, when it fails, is as ſure to be deemed raſhneſs by the very ſame people. However, to conclude the ſubject, this I know of my adopted ſon, that he would undertake almoſt impoſſibilities to ſerve his King, country, and a friend: ſo now, brother, tell me why you

ſtarted

ſtarted thoſe queries. My niece, you wrote me word, is engaged, elſe I——"

"Why, could you ſuppoſe, brother," interrupted the Sheriff, "that though you have adopted him, I would give my daughter to a man who has no apparent fortune, and is not acknowledged by any one?"

"I would with all my heart and ſoul, were I in your place; but Oh money, money is the idol of ſo many! Edward Forteſcue poſſeſſes a thouſand virtues;—and mark my words, he will be a man of fortune—nay, he is that already, what with his prize-money and pay; and he will not be contented with what he has got: he will be an Admiral ere he grows grey. What is all your money when put in competition with ſuch a character? He has made his way under every diſadvantage. But you think me prejudiced in his favour. I am afraid you are prejudiced againſt him without any ſingle good reaſon, except his not being rich; ſo I hope the man you have ſelected for Maria, poſſeſſes a few of his good qualities. As to his having five thouſand

thouſand a year, that is no proof of his merit, in my eyes: your daughter's thirty thouſand pounds, which you ſay you mean to give her, is enough for a moderate couple. There are many miſerable ones with twice her lover's fortune; but pray what is his general character, leaving money out of the queſtion?"

"Why, I can't pretend to ſay he poſſeſſes any very ſhining qualities, but he is a man of good family, much reſpected in the City, and he is generally reckoned a very fine gentleman."

"Oh Heavens! your concluding eulogium has ſpoiled all; I have an averſion to gentlemen; they are generally fit for petty tyrants, to triſle about their wives' dreſſing-rooms, and torment them to death with their ſkill in dreſs."

"I hope, brother, you won't ſay any thing more about my being prejudiced," ſaid the Sheriff.—"You are determined to diſlike the young man, though you never ſaw him. However, you may depend upon it, I will

I will not endeavour to force Mr. Downing upon my daughter. She has already had many admirers, all of whom she has thought proper to reject: I must therefore acknowledge I have rather set my mind upon the match. Indeed I have conditionally given my consent to the young man, as I believe I wrote you word; but I am fearful he has lately rather lost ground in her good opinion."

"No proof of his merit. Maria appears to me a clever, sensible girl, and very much improved. A lover ought to improve upon acquaintance, for very few husbands do."

The Sheriff thought he ought to mention the little *fracas* that had taken place at the play-house, and its consequences; and was entering into several more details, when the young people returned from their walk.—The Captain therefore gaily saluted his *son* with "None but the brave deserve the fair," catching hold of his hand as he said, "I was listening to the lesson you gave the gay Officer, my brave lad.

Edward

Edward ſmiled, and the entrance of Mrs. Bloomfield, who ſummoned them to tea, gave a turn to the converſation, though her uncle's quotation had made a deep impreſſion upon Maria. He certainly could not allude to Downing; ſhe therefore was convinced he would perſuade her father, at her requeſt, to diſmiſs ſo cowardly a being.—Once freed from his perſecution, ſhe endeavoured to perſuade herſelf ſhe ſhould be completely happy;—ſhe was therefore in greater ſpirits that evening than ſhe had been for ſome time, and was ſorry they were all to leave Weſton the following morning, as it was neceſſary Captain Bloomfield ſhould pay his reſpects at the Admiralty, though he did not wiſh to go out again for ſome time; obſerving, he grew old, and wanted to be laid up in port between whiles, to gain ſtrength to do his duty when in employ.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

LITTLE of moment occurred till the Wedneſday, when Edward, having ſome buſineſs to tranſact with his agent, learned, to his infinite chagrin, that he was out of town, and was not expected to return till the Saturday; and on that day he propoſed ſetting out for Plymouth, where his ſhip ſtill lay.—Finding, therefore, he had no alternative, he returned into Crutched Friars, to inform the family he was under the neceſſity of going a few miles into the country, or of leaving ſome of his buſineſs unfiniſhed; and to that he was rather averſe, obſerving, with a ſmile, a French cannon might effectually preclude him from ſettling the matter to his ſatisfaction,

tion, if he deferred it to a longer period.—Maria's heart ſickened at the thought; ſhe felt her colour forſaking her cheeks, and turned aſide to conceal her weakneſs, while her brother enquired how far the gentleman's houſe was from town.

"It is in Kent, three miles on the other ſide of Rocheſter; not far, therefore, from where I was extended by the two fellows, who took upon themſelves to free the high roads from ſuſpicious people."

"I know both the gentleman and his houſe," ſaid the Sheriff.—"Mr. Alderſon has lately purchaſed it—it is to the right, upon the Dover road."

"It is only a pleaſant drive," ſaid William; "I am not very buſy," looking at his father, who inſtantly replied—

"I can ſpare you without any inconvenience; therefore, ſuppoſe you drive the Captain down in your gig; you are a very tolerable whip."

"Don't ſpeak ſo ſlightly of my ſkill, my dear Sir. I will whiſk him down to Rocheſter

Rocheſter by a faſhionable dinner hour, ſo let's be off."

Captain Bloomfield, who had entered the room while his nephew was ſpeaking, ſaid—

"Not ſo faſt, young ſpark, I have alſo ſome buſineſs in the ſame quarter; therefore what ſay you, brother, to our all going, if you are not too buſy. The jaunt will do us good. William may drive Edward, and my ſiſter, niece, you, and I can go in the coach."

The Sheriff begged to be excuſed, but deſired his wife and daughter to oblige his brother, as they could all go very well in the coach and four to Dartford, where his horſes might wait their return, as they could proceed with hacks, and be back in London as early as they pleaſed the next day.

Mrs. Bloomfield, ever acquieſcent, was ſoon ready, as well as Maria; and in leſs than an hour they left Crutched Friars in excellent ſpirits, when, upon Blackheath, the Captain, who had learned it was his

niece

niece who had relieved his young favourite, desired to be shewn the stile which led into Alderman Bulford's grounds; he supposed neither Edward nor Maria had forgotten the spot. They were both rather confused.

Edward alone answered, it had made too deep an impression upon him at the time to be easily forgot; and but for Miss Bloomfield and her friend's passing so *a-propos*, he most probably should have made his exit in that ditch, which would have been going out of the world very scurvily. He pointed out the spot in a ludicrous manner, and avoided taking any notice of the Crown, not to distress his lovely friend; and as he perceived she rather wished to change the subject, he remarked various beauties in the prospect, which drew the attention of the Captain to other objects. Having taken post-horses at the Rose at Dartford, they drove to the Crown at Rochester, where they had agreed to order dinner, while the two Officers went forward in a post-chaise to the agent's, where

where they did not mean to ſtop above half an hour.

Forteſcue, having great reaſon to remember the friendly treatment of the oſtler at this very houſe, began to look about him as ſoon as he alighted, and perceived the very man to whom he conſidered himſelf ſo much indebted, talking to the lad who had drove the leaders; and as their eyes were moſtly directed towards him, he had not a doubt but he was the ſubject of their converſation.

The oſtler's aſtoniſhment was ſoon viſible; indeed the poor fellow was tempted to doubt the evidence of his own eyes.—"Was it poſſible," he thought, "this fine young gentleman in the undreſs naval uniform, and who had alighted from one of the moſt elegant carriages he had ever ſeen, and which was attended by two outriders in very rich riding jackets, ſhould be the poor youth he had relieved when travelling on foot without a penny in his pocket? Captain Bloomfield having called to him, he followed him into the houſe, and the oſtler learned,

learned, with increaſed wonder, that this was the very ſame Captain Forteſcue who had afforded converſation to all England. Wiſhing to ſpeak to the honeſt fellow, Edward, after it had been agreed they ſhould diſpatch a meſſenger to Mr. Alderſon's, to requeſt he would fix his own time to ſee Captain Bloomfield and himſelf, that they might not have their ride for their pains, as he might not be at home when they arrived, returned into the yard, and approaching the oſtler, gravely aſked him if he recollected him.

"I can't ſay I did, your Honour; but this boy," turning to the poſtillion, "was trying to perſuade me he remembered you, and I thought there might be ſome truth in what he ſaid, as I am ſure it was no common perſon I——"

The man heſitated.

"I underſtand what you mean, my good friend," ſaid Edward; "and if you have forgot my features, your's are perfectly familiar to me. I have long intended to convince

vince you I can be as grateful as you were humane. But who is that lad? he drove our leaders, if I miſtake not."

"He did, Sir," ſaid the highly gratified oſtler.

"Then how came he to know me? I don't remember having ſeen him when I ſlept in your hay-loft, and ſupped at your expence."

"There, Robert," cried the lad, in an accent of triumph, "now did not I ſay as how this was the ſame gentleman?"

"The young devil has a better memory than I have, your Honour. Indeed, if the truth muſt out, I could not believe my eyes.—However, I am ſure I am very happy to ſee your Honour look ſo hearty and well.—That boy, you muſt know, Sir, is the ſon of a butcher, whoſe name was Haunch; and he ſwore to me you were the ſame gentleman who came to his father in great diſtreſs, when he was the overſeer, and while he was drinking at the Anchor; and becauſe he thought you very harſhly treated, he gave you

you all the money he had, amounting to a penny. Is that true, your Honour?"

"As the Goſpel, my good friend."

"I always ſaid he was a good lad," replied the oſtler, "and would not tell a lie if he knew it. His father, to be ſure, was as great a raſcal as ever lived, but that is nothing to his children, as I always ſay. He robbed the pariſh of a pretty ſum, and then ſet off, leaving them to provide for his poor wife and family;—ſo I took little Sam into our yard, becauſe he was always very handy, and obliging to every body; and as he turned out well, I got him a place, where he is likely to do very well in his way."

"You have acted very humanely towards him, my good Robert; but I am greatly indebted to him, for having once received his whole fortune. I am in want of juſt ſuch a ſervant; and if he will accept of the place, I will endeavour to make him amends for his former generoſity towards me; but if he prefers the life he now leads, I will nevertheleſs do ſomething for him."

The

The lad had walked away, but the oſtler ſaid he was ſure he would be rejoiced when he learned what an excellent place his penny had procured him; and the honeſt fellow's countenance denoted the pleaſure he felt in the happy proſpects of the poor boy, who, but for him, would in all likelihood have been forced to aſſociate with thoſe poor creatures his father had ſo baſely robbed, and no doubt ill-treated: while Forteſcue remembered the pleaſing impreſſion the poor lad's generoſity had made upon him at the time, and was truly happy he had it in his power to provide for him, and at the ſame time to acquire a faithful, honeſt attendant. While he was reflecting upon the caprices of Fortune, a man hobbled, by the help of a ſtick, out of one of the ſtables to aſk a queſtion of his *maſter*.

"And pray where have you been theſe three hours, that you was not to be found?" aſked the oſtler.—"What, I ſuppoſe you have been whining out ſome of your pitiful,

canting, hypocritical ſtories, and ſo have procured enough money to get drunk.—There never was your fellow. I would not truſt you to look after a dog I deteſted, that was not under my own eyes; ſo out of the yard you ſhall go. It matters not any longer what you have been; I will have ſome one upon whom I can depend."

"'Tis very hard," grumbled out the man, "one can't have a moment to oneſelf. This is always the way with you."

"No grumbling I deſire, but leave the yard.—You have no wages to take; I have forgiven your negligence too often; I took you in to keep you from ſtarving, or being ſent to the workhouſe, where you, and Haunch, the overſeer, have long deſerved to be; but, in return for my humanity, you idle away every minute of the day that you can ſlink off. So long as the blame does not fall upon you, what do you care? So tramp, I ſay—here you ſhall not remain."

The man turned his back, and the oſtler ſaid—

"I beg

"I beg your Honour's pardon, but that fellow would provoke a ſaint. He once kept the King's Head, one of the beſt public houſes in the town of Rocheſter before he got into it; but he made ſhift to guzzle away a fortune in it, inſtead of making one; and his ſucceſſor, who was his firſt couſin, has done the ſame. All his goods are to be ſold off to-morrow, and the houſe to be ſhut up. Shame on ſuch wretches! I only wiſh I had money enough to take it; I warrant me I ſhould make both ends meet, and ſave ſomething handſome every year of my life.—There is a good old man now living, who made three thouſand pounds in that very houſe; but ſome people can't eat their bread if it be put into their mouths, and even chewed for them."

"Did not that lame man keep the King's Head," aſked Edward, "when you accommodated me with a night's lodging?"

"He did indeed, your Honour; and rot me if his unkindneſs to you, which I remember you mentioned, had not quite

eſcaped my memory, elſe I will be ſhot if he ſhould have come into this yard. He broke about two years ago; ſo I got him in, when ſtarving almoſt, as a helper, becauſe he had ſeen better days, and I am blamed for his negligence every hour. But my maſter has ſome pity for the ſottiſh wretch; ſo he wiſhed me to put up with him as long as I could, though he has frequently been tempted to kick him out of the ſtables himſelf when he has provoked him. He tumbled down his cellar ſtairs one night in a drunken fit, going to draw liquor for himſelf after his doors were ſhut, and lamed himſelf for life; it was a judgment upon him, I verily believe."

"He certainly gave me reaſon to remember him," rejoined Edward; "but I think he ſeems to have been ſufficiently puniſhed by your account, and will moſt probably end his days in a workhouſe."

"'Tis no matter, Sir; for he has no more feeling than this coach-wheel, though he can whine, and cant, and tell fifty pitiful ſtories to get money from ſtrangers."

"Well,

" Well, but what would it coſt to go into the houſe he once kept ?"

" Oh ! no great matter now, your Honour, though he gave two hundred pounds for the good-will only ; and a ſober painstaking man might ſoon bring it about again to what it then was. If I had two hundred pounds in the room of one, at my command, I ſhould have no fear of ſucceſs ; nay, I could borrow as much as I want, or get credit of the brewer for the matter of that, but that won't ſuit me ; I muſt brew my own good wholeſome ale whenever I go into the public line, and buy my malt and hops at the beſt hand. That is the way old Collins made his fortune ; and I always ſay, follow the maxims of thoſe who convince us their's is a good method."

" I perfectly agree with you, my friend : but have you any family ?"

" A wife and two children, your Honour, and a pretty little houſe very decently furniſhed, though I ſay it, and which would go a great way towards furniſhing the King's

Head; and I may ſay there is not a more proper woman in all Rocheſter for the public line. She is ſober and well beſpoken, and thoroughly good-tempered; but, as I ſaid before, I will never run the riſk of borrowing money: I can make ſhift to live, and ſave a trifle now; and a hundred pounds is too much money to pay intereſt for. Beſides, was any thing to happen to the lender, why a body might be ruined before they knew where they were; ſo. I will e'en think no more about the matter. The gentleman, who juſt now paſſed us, and went into that room on the right hand, is the owner of the King's Head; he is always hankering about here on purpoſe to engage me to take it, and has frequently hinted he would let me have it a bargain."

Without any farther ceremony, Edward told him, as he was well convinced he was a very worthy man, and did all the good in his power, if he would immediately go and cloſe the bargain, he would give him one hundred pounds, and lend him another,

before

before he left Rocheſter. After a momentary pauſe, of apparent doubt concerning what he had heard, till he had conſulted the looks of the generous Captain, he cried—

" Heaven will reward your Honour's goodneſs; and as I am ſure ſuch a ſum of money won't be any great loſs to you, I will thankfully accept your firſt kind offer; ſo ſhall I call Mr. Brown out, and cloſe the bargain in your preſence, to convince you I don't deceive you? The ſale will be ſtopped; and as there is not a vaſt deal to do juſt now, I can attend my maſter's buſineſs till he can provide himſelf."

Mr. Brown coming into the yard before Edward could make any reply, the oſtler beckoned him, and enquired whether he had let the King's Head.

" No; I hope you will have it yet, Robert. I am ſure it will ſuit you; and I know you would like to have it; you ſhan't want a friend, as I told you before."

"I thank you, Sir, for your kind offer; you certainly promiſed to lend me a hundred pounds for two, three, or four years, at five per cent. intereſt, and I am as much obliged to you as if I had accepted it. But this gentleman, to whom I once happened to do a very trifling ſervice, has generouſly given me a hundred pounds in return for what coſt me about a groat. Now, at a word, what ſhall I give you for your houſe and fixtures?"

"A noble gift indeed!" ſaid the landlord.—"I wiſh it was in my power to be equally generous; but ſince the gentleman has been ſo good to you, I will convince him I wiſh to ſerve ſuch a honeſt, induſtrious couple to the beſt of my abilities. I ſhould be very ſorry to have the houſe ſhut up, particularly as I know you will make a fortune there: ſo inſtead of having a ſale, as you will want pretty near all the furniture, it ſhall be appraiſed by a perſon of your own chuſing, and I will let you have it for

for ten pounds leſs than it may be conſidered worth. I think I can't offer fairer."

The oſtler's eyes were fixed upon his benefactor, who inſtantly replied—

"It is generouſly ſaid, Sir, and ſerves to ſtrengthen the good opinion I have of this honeſt man. You certainly know beſt, Robert; but I would adviſe you to cloſe the bargain, and let the buſineſs be finiſhed directly, as I own I ſhould like to ſee you put in poſſeſſion before I leave Rocheſter, which I expect to do to-morrow morning; but I will give you the money this evening."

Edward then haſtened back to his company, to whom he immediately related what he had done, and the various ſtories to which he had been liſtening.

Captain Bloomfield was delighted, but proteſted he would go his halves in the gift he intended to make the oſtler.

Maria declared her impatience to ſee the lad who had ſo generouſly parted with his little all, to relieve the wants of a fellow-crea-

ture in diſtreſs; but was fearful he would make a very awkward valet.

"One of the beſt in the world for a ſailor," replied her uncle.

Suffice it to ſay, Edward had the ſatisfaction to terminate the buſineſs which had brought him into Kent, and to ſee honeſt Robert maſter of the King's Head before he left Rocheſter, followed by the benedictions of the grateful man, to which were added thoſe of his really notable wife, who, with her children, came to pay her duty to their youthful benefactor, and whom ſhe fervently prayed might return in ſafety from his approaching voyage;--while the overjoyed Samuel Haunch, who had returned with his late maſter's horſes to Dartford the preceding evening, waited his arrival there with the utmoſt impatience, and never felt ſo happy as when ordered to join their ſuite. Edward, that he might not encroach upon the Sheriff's hoſpitality, would have ſent him down to Plymouth that very evening; but this

this the Citizen would not allow: it was therefore determined he ſhould remain in Crutched Friars till his maſter departed, which was fixed for Saturday; on which day he had promiſed to dine with his kind friend, from whoſe hoſpitable board he had, under pretence of buſineſs or other engagements, frequently abſented himſelf, not wiſhing to ſtrengthen his growing partiality for the lovely Maria, of whoſe union with Downing he could not bring himſelf to think of with common patience. Nor indeed was Captain Bloomfield at all pleaſed with his intended nephew:—however, if his niece did but like him, as he told his brother, his opinion of him was of little conſequence. Yet he could not help remarking, with no ſmall degree of ſatisfaction, that Maria's countenance always brightened when his beloved Edward appeared, and as generally fell when her admirer was announced:—to bring about a match between the child of his affection and his handſome niece, ſoon became one of his moſt fervent

wiſhes. They were both very young;—therefore, admitting a few years elapſed before he could bring his project to bear, they would only be the more prudent. As ſoon as Edward left London, he would have a little ſerious converſation with Maria, who, he could not help thinking, by her behaviour to him at times, had ſomething upon her mind; he would afford her an opportunity, and act accordingly. William, he knew, would rejoice to call his friend brother, as he did not ſcruple openly to expreſs his diſapprobation of the propoſed alliance; therefore, if Edward would but elucidate the myſtery which ſtill hung over him, and which was already, in ſome degree, explained, he was of opinion the Sheriff would not be very averſe to the connection. As for Mrs. Bloomfield, ſhe had too ſeldom a will of her own to render it even neceſſary to conſult her as a party in the buſineſs; and matters had not gone ſo far, but they might be broken off with honour.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

HAVING ſettled all his buſineſs at the Admiralty, received his final orders, and made every other preparation neceſſary for the voyage he was going to undertake, Edward was punctual to his engagement in Crutched Friars. As he was to leave London in the Exeter mail, dinner had been ordered at four, that they might have as much of his company as poſſible. He appeared much more thoughtful than uſual, it was remarked, when he joined the family at the appointed hour; nay, he felt ſuch a preſſure, that he ſecretly wiſhed he had ſet off privately, as he had more than once intended, by which means he would have

ſpared

ſpared himſelf the irkſome taſk of taking leave of his benefactor, and of bidding the fair Maria a formal adieu in the preſence of her father. To baniſh thoſe gloomy reflections which ſeemed to have taken poſſeſſion of his mind, as ſoon as the cloth was removed, Captain Bloomfield puſhed about the bottles with more than uſual briſkneſs. Edward gueſſed his kind intention, and ſaid, in as gay a tone as he could aſſume—

"I perceive, my dear and beſt friend, you think I want ſomething to raiſe my ſpirits, and I acknowledge you are perfectly in the right; for I hardly know what has taken poſſeſſion of me to-day, but believe it can be nothing elſe than the idea of parting with you, my more than father; perhaps for ever. Don't miſtake my meaning, my dear Sir; for there is a ſecret, and you well know how obſtinately I have preſerved it; yet who ever had ſuch a right to any one's confidence as yourſelf?—I believe it is the thoughts of taking leave of you, with that ſecret ſtill upon my mind, that weighs me down;

down; yet it muſt be ſo, though I truſt and hope the time will come when I ſhall be able to account fully for my ſtrange conduct, more to my own ſatisfaction than I can at preſent. I wiſh profeſſional duty would have permitted me to have viſited ſome of my friends who are perhaps yet living; but I have not had a week to ſpare ſince my arrival in England, and I could not have made the journey in a ſhorter time. To have addreſſed them in writing after ſuch an abſence, and when they very poſſibly ſuppoſe me no more, would neither be ſufficiently reſpectful, nor perhaps proper; though I have begun ſeveral letters ſince I have been in London, but never could expreſs or excuſe myſelf to my own ſatisfaction. Indeed I hardly know who to addreſs, for, upon my honour, I know no more what relations I may now have living, than you do: I therefore wiſh to make many enquiries, which I can only do in perſon, before I give them reaſon to ſuppoſe I am ſtill in being. I certainly am in ſome reſpects the ſon

in

in the parable; for though I have not ſpent my inheritance, I have my time in a foreign land; and I perhaps ought, like him, to return to my father with his words in my mouth, admitting I ſtill have a father."

"A father!" exclaimed the aſtoniſhed Captain; "can you then have had ſo near a relation, and yet never have addreſſed him ſince we became acquainted?"

"I abſconded from my parental home about two years before that time. I did write to my father before I left England, to inform him I was well, and would henceforth take care of myſelf. I know I ought to have been thus explicit when you ſo generouſly took me under your protection; but I had made a vow never to reveal my family or name, till I could do it with honour and ſatisfaction to myſelf. Forteſcue is one of the names I received from my godfather; I hardly yet think myſelf entitled to couple it with the reſpectable one belonging to my family. But as I wiſh in ſome meaſure to account for my eccentricities, I will, with

your

your leave, while opportunity offers, enter into a few details reſpecting my elopement from my parents."

The curioſity of every one preſent was raiſed to the higheſt pitch; and Edward, after a few minutes' recollection, thus began.

"At ſeven years old I was ſent to a public ſchool in the North of England, not a great many miles from where my parents then, and very probably ſtill reſide. As I was bleſſed with an excellent memory, and a very tolerable underſtanding, at ten years old my maſters were pleaſed to ſay, I was more advanced in my ſtudies than many of my elder ſchoolfellows. Their praiſe certainly made me vain, and I am fearful rather impudent; at leaſt I know I was ſoon the commander of a conſiderable party of my companions—ſome older, others younger than their Captain, as I was ſtyled; and a very pretty tyrant I became. Some of my adherents I governed by terror, others by perſuaſion; and as I have ſaved many of my ſtaunchеſt ſupporters a ſevere flogging, by conſtruing

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conſtruing their themes, or doing their exerciſes, and not unfrequently taking their miſdemeanours upon myſelf, I had ſuch a number in ſubordination, that I ſeldom planned a piece of miſchief which I did not put into practice with their aſſiſtance. In ſhort, I really became the terror of the neighbourhood; complaints poured in from all quarters againſt young Pickle, as ſome named me.

"My maſter was a very ſevere diſciplinarian, and was not ſparing of his birch-trees. Indeed I frequently came in for a double allowance, becauſe I never would acknowledge who were my accomplices: and I was ſcarcely leſs ſevere among my own choſen phalanx; for even at that age I never could forgive a boy who either betrayed his friend, or broke his word, to ſave himſelf from puniſhment.

"Complaints continued to be made, and ſome were addreſſed to my father, who wrote me many very ſevere letters upon my frolics. But I never could come to a ſerious reſolution to

to alter my conduct, else I certainly should not have persevered: for even at that age, I have frequently reasoned with myself, after receiving any of my father's letters, upon what was likely to be the result of my mischievous pranks that I might have in agitation; and yet, if it appeared likely to afford me any amusement, I could not relinquish my design. But if ever we unintentionally injured any poor person, I never failed to exact contributions accordingly, when our rent days came round: we were therefore far more dreaded by the rich neighbours than the cottagers.

"One old gentleman in particular, denominated the Squire, and who was the acting Magistrate for the village, of a most tyrannical, overbearing disposition, was the object of my aversion; indeed he was generally feared or despised. Our master was his tenant, therefore much subjected to his controul, as he frequently presumed to dictate what punishments he thought it necessary should be inflicted upon any of the

the ſcholars who incurred his diſpleaſure, which none did more frequently than myſelf, and ſometimes for the moſt trifling cauſes. I had therefore long panted for revenge; and after one of my floggings, the moſt ſevere I had ever experienced, at which the Juſtice choſe to be preſent, to ſee that the uſher did his duty, as he had occaſioned my puniſhment by preferring an unjuſt accuſation againſt me, I laid a plan which I reſolved to put into immediate execution, while ſtill ſmarting under the effects of his injuſtice. He generally ſpent an hour every evening at a neighbouring public-houſe or inn, and the neareſt road to and from the Hall, as his manſion was denominated, was over a narrow wooden bridge, which croſſed a large ditch that had been for ſome time nearly dry, though there were ſeveral feet of ſoft mud at the bottom. I therefore procured a ſaw, and nearly ſeparated the plank which compoſed the bridge: but to prevent any other perſon from reaping the benefit of my plan, I put a prop underneath, to which I faſtened

faſtened a cord, carrying it to a convenient hiding-place at ſome diſtance, from whence I could witneſs the effect of my contrivance. Convinced from examination that the moment I thought proper to withdraw my prop, whoever was upon the bridge, muſt fall into the mud below, at the time when he uſually paid his viſit, I was upon the watch, having let none of my companions into my ſecret, that no one but myſelf might ſuffer, ſhould I be found out. How rejoiced was I when, unperceived, I ſaw him advancing towards my prop; I let him take the third ſtep upon the bridge, which, according to my meaſurement, was the proper ſpot, when by a ſmart ſudden jerk I removed my prop, and down he fell into the mire!

"I ran off, and got into the play-ground before the old fellow had crawled out, which he did at laſt as completely covered as I could wiſh. I was amply revenged, and in the height of my exultation, communicated my ſucceſs to my companions,

companions, who were as much pleaſed when they ſaw the old man, as I was. Far different, however, were the ſenſations of the Juſtice, who, before he quitted the ſpot, ſent for the maſter and uſher, conceiving he owed his fall to the miſchievous contrivance of ſome or all the boys, who, he was convinced, had no reaſon either to reſpect or eſteem him. They all agreed that the bridge had been ſawed aſunder for the purpoſe, and the cord, which was ſtill faſtened and viſible, led to the diſcovery of the whole contrivance; when they traced it to my hiding-place, and from thence followed footſteps to the wall which ſurrounded the play-ground, and over which I had ſprung.

"The boys in general were therefore charged inſtantly with the fact, which was as generally denied: but that would not do; they were next ſeparately examined: when it came to my turn, I merely ſaid that every piece of miſchief was attributed to me. However, as it was evident ſome one was guilty, the maſter publicly declared

that except the culprits came inſtantly forward, every boy in the ſchool ſhould undergo the puniſhment he ſhould award to whoever was the perpetrator of the deed.

" I ſcorned to involve ſo many in my ſufferings, therefore boldly ſtepped forward, and declared myſelf to be the whole planner and executor of the ſcheme, acknowledging I had been actuated by revenge, as I had frequently wrongfully ſuffered, from the miſrepreſentations of his Worſhip, and particularly in a late inſtance. Had my maſter dared to have given way to his own feelings, I am inclined to believe, owing to his former injuſtice, he would have pronounced my pardon: but he was obliged to deliver in his report to his landlord. I had therefore made up my mind to become another Saint Bartholomew, though all my companions ſwore, that rather than I ſhould ſuffer for what they would all readily have engaged in, had I admitted them into my confidence, they would leave the ſchool, and give for their reaſon, that Juſtice ——, not the maſter,

maſter, had the regulating of the boys. Meanwhile the maſter, perhaps underſtanding what was ſo likely to happen, reported to his malicious landlord accordingly, when he decreed that either I ſhould be expelled his ſchool, or my maſter ſhould quit his houſe, ſo exactly calculated for his buſineſs, and which he had himſelf fitted up at no inconſiderable expence; as the wiſe man proteſted there was no knowing what might be the conſequence of ſuffering ſo wicked, turbulent, and miſchievous a lad as myſelf, who had even attempted to drown or ſmother him, to remain among the ſcholars; I might in time induce them to rob upon the highway, as I had a band at command, who would hardly think it a ſin to ſet fire to the Hall, rather than want a bonfire at any time.

" The moſt ſevere flogging would have given me very little concern, compared to what I felt when I was informed I was baniſhed the ſchool, as I knew my father was very warm; and he had written to me only

only a few days before, declaring, if he heard any more complaints againſt me, he would renounce me for his ſon. However, there was no appeal from the decree of ſo wiſe a man. My maſter dared not even ſee me; and in leſs than an hour I was ſent off with one of the uſhers, who was the bearer of a letter to my father, written by my accuſer and judge; of courſe not very likely to mollify his anger, though it might ſerve to palliate the diſgraceful manner in which I was expelled from a ſeminary he had himſelf greatly endeavoured to ſupport.

"The uſher declared his diſapprobation of ſuch haſty proceedings: he thought the maſter would loſe more than he would gain by ſo quietly acquieſcing with the Juſtice's decree, and promiſed to do all in his power to ſoften matters to my father. Though he condemned me very ſeverely for having ſuffered my love of miſchief to carry me ſuch unwarrantable lengths; yet I perceived he enjoyed the trick I had played the old tyrant. But now comes the ſequel of that

adventure, my dear friend, which has been the cauſe of ſo many more; and now have I moſt need to beſpeak your indulgence.—My father was at home, and alone, when we reached his houſe, not having been very well in the courſe of the day, or he would have accompanied my mother and ſiſter to a neighbouring gentleman's ſeat, where they were to ſpend a few days. I had made up my mind for the worſt I thought I had to dread; and as I never liked to ſkulk behind, guilty or innocent, and particularly after the encouragement the uſher had given me, I walked boldly forward into his ſtudy, followed by my companion. My father was very much ſurpriſed to ſee me at ſo late an hour, for it was near his bed-time; and unfortunately, hardly knowing how to begin his ſtory, the uſher gave him the Juſtice's letter before he entered upon my defence.—I ſaw his anger riſe when he had read the firſt line, and having concluded, I fell upon my knees, confeſſed my guilt, and beſought his forgiveneſs, aſſuring him the Juſtice was

a very

a very bad, ſpiteful old man, and had more than once got both me and ſeveral of my friends flogged, or otherwiſe puniſhed wrongfully, and they would ſay the ſame.—I was proceeding in this manner upon my defence, when my father interrupted me.

'You young villain,' he exclaimed, with ſome vehemence, 'how dare you make uſe of ſuch language, after endeavouring either to drown or ſuffocate the perſon you allude to, becauſe he had offended you or ſome of your party? Out of my ſight this moment! I never will forgive you.—I no longer conſider you as my ſon; out of my ſight, therefore, and never let me have the misfortune to ſee you again!

"As nearly as I can recollect, thoſe were his very words. Thunderſtruck by his vehemence, I roſe from my ſuppliant poſture, hardly knowing whether he was in earneſt, till he repeated, 'Begone! I renounce all farther connection with ſuch a hardened young villain.—Begone!'

he vociferated with increaſing violence, 'this moment, before——'

"I heard no more; but running out of the room, I exclaimed, in my turn—'You never ſhall ſee me again till you are convinced of your injuſtice towards me.' I left the houſe as ſpeedily as I had the room, and repeated the raſh vow as I flew, rather than ran from my paternal manſion, and as I purſued the moſt by-paths towards the neareſt ſeaport town, which I reached early the next morning; and, upon enquiry, finding a veſſel was on the point of ſailing for London, I agreed for my paſſage, though I had not a ſhilling in my pocket. But I had a watch and a pair of buckles, which I ſold, or more properly the Captain did for me in London, when we arrived on the fourth day after I had bid ſo precipitate an adieu to my houſehold gods; and on the fifth he put me on board another veſſel bound for France, where I told him I was going to join my uncle at Douai; but before I ſailed, I wrote a few lines to my mother,

ther, to assure her and my father I was safe and well, and meant to take care of myself in future, leaving them to suppose I intended to remain in London; for though I had had plenty of time for reflection during a severe sea sickness, my heart still swelled at the recollection of being disclaimed; and suffice it to say, my uncle, or more properly speaking, my mother's uncle, received me with the utmost cordiality, thought I had acted right, and hoped I should make my way in the world without having recourse to the bounty of a parent who had not, he conceived, done justice to the principles by which my conduct had been actuated. The French Revolution, and his untimely death, prevented his making that provision for me he had fully intended; and I need not tell you, my dearest benefactor, what befel me after I quitted Douai, for your benevolence has enabled me to fulfil the first wish of my heart. I have in a great measure rendered myself independent; I shall therefore never be a burthen to my father, should

he again deign to acknowledge the child he, in a moment of paſſion, drove from his houſe."

Edward ceaſed ſpeaking.—His benefactor thanked him for having been thus communicative; adding, "Though I cannot abſolutely exonerate you from blame, my beloved Edward, I can't help applauding ſome part of your conduct: ſtill I moſt ſincerely pity your father and mother.—With what pleaſure, I am convinced, they will receive their long-loſt ſon; the fatted calf, I am ſure, will be killed. I only wiſh I could ſet out with you for the North this very moment, though you certainly ought not to appear abruptly before them; ſtill, ſurely, a few lines would relieve their anxiety. You mentioned a ſiſter—why not addreſs her?

"I cannot write, Sir, elſe I have or had two brothers, as well as a ſiſter; to them I might addreſs myſelf. My ſiſter may be married; but I will not enter into any more details. As I wiſh to introduce you myſelf

myſelf to my family, I ſhall therefore give you no farther clue to diſcover them. In a few months I may return to England, and then I give you my word of honour you ſhall lead the reputed prodigal to the feet of his parents. My father is, like myſelf, the younger ſon of a family of ſome conſideration in the world; and, at the time I quitted him, was in the ſervice of his King and country. I have really not dared to make any enquiries about him, ſo much do I dread hearing he is no more, which I might, in ſome reſpects, be the cauſe of, for he is by no means advanced in years; ſo that, all things conſidered, though I dare ſay nineteen out of twenty would condemn me, I cannot reſolve to put an end to my doubts and fears till I once more reviſit England, when I hope the ſervice I may be able to do my country in the interval, may obtain my pardon; therefore, for the preſent, my dear friends, I muſt remain Edward Forteſcue."

The curiosity of the Bloomfields, particularly the females, had been raised to the greatest pitch: their disappointment was of course in proportion, as they were not more than half satisfied; but it was no small consolation to the greater part of the company to find the young hero was of noble extraction.

Maria's countenance had varied several times during his recital, and it brightened at intervals towards the conclusion. It was not his birth she minded so much as his actions. In her opinion he acted right in obeying his father's injunctions, who had certainly treated him with great cruelty;—and William openly applauded the noble spirit he had displayed in acknowledging his guilt, rather than permit his friends to suffer for his faults, and privately thought his father had been properly punished.

"Allow me one question, my dearest Edward," resumed his benefactor.—"Did not your parents make some attempt to discover whither you had bent your steps?"

"Very

"Very poſſibly they did, Sir—nay, I have not a doubt; but my Catholic uncle never correſponded with any of his relations. His brother, my mother's father, had read his recantation;—this had of courſe brought on a great coolneſs between them; but he once viſited his native land during my childhood, when I ſaw him at my maternal grandfather's; and the notice he took of me, urchin as I then was, made ſuch an impreſſion on my mind, that to him I bent my ſteps, in preference to applying to a nearer relation, who was at too great a diſtance to afford me his immediate protection. However, ſhould I be reſtored to the favour of every branch of my family, my expectations, in point of fortune, are not very great, as I have, or had, two brothers older than myſelf, and a ſiſter three years younger: add to which, my father, I hope, has ſtill an elder brother, and my mother was alſo a younger child."

"Well, you mean to make a fortune by your heroiſm," remarked the Captain.—

"If I live to ſee you once more reſtored to your family, I ſhall hardly have another deſire to form; though I ſincerely wiſh I had a daughter worthy of you to beſtow in marriage, that you might become my ſon in good earneſt."

As the time for Edward's departure drew near, tea was ordered.—Maria aſſumed a gaiety very foreign to her heart; and glad of any occupation, requeſted to ſave her mother the trouble of preſiding at the tea-table. Her evident trepidation did not eſcape Forteſcue's notice, and it gave him a ſenſation he had never before experienced; yet he was very unwilling to fancy himſelf in love, and with a woman in a manner engaged to another man. To encourage ſuch a paſſion, admitting his agitation proceeded from that cauſe, would be far more criminal than having ſo haſtily abandoned his father's houſe. Tea being over, the Sheriff left the room, and the Captain called Mrs. Bloomfield out to enquire whether ſhe had ordered a few articles of luxury ſhe had

undertaken, at his requeſt, to provide for his *eleve*, to be properly packed. The three young people were therefore left alone.

"Where will you be to-morrow evening at this time, Captain Forteſcue?" aſked Maria.

"I hardly know," he replied, with ſome heſitation; "but I hope frequently to hear of all my kind friends in Crutched Friars, through the means of your brother, who has kindly promiſed to correſpond with me whenever opportunity offers; and I deſire, my dear William, you will write me a long account of your ſiſter's wedding, which I ſuppoſe will take place long before I return."

The young Captain had never delivered himſelf with a worſe grace. Maria turned pale, and ſeemed ſcarcely able to ſupport herſelf. She was ſtanding, and caught hold of the back of a chair; their eyes met, and ſcarcely knowing what he was about, Edward ſtepped haſtily forward, and took her other hand;—he gazed ſtedfaſtly

upon her for ſeveral ſeconds, before he was able to articulate, in a voice ſcarcely intelligible—

"You don't ſeem well, Miſs Bloomfield."

William at this time being under the influence of the moſt tender paſſion, haſtily turned to one of the windows, ſaying—

"Z—ds, if you expect an account of the wedding from me, you will wait ſome time for it; for, with my conſent, Maria ſhall never give her hand to that puppy, Downing."

Maria was, by gentle means, trying to diſengage her hand; the tears guſhed from her eyes, and ſhe would have left the room, but Forteſcue held her faſt: again their eyes met; their hands trembled in each others, till the agitated fair one ſeemed to reproach him by looks, for ſhe could not articulate a word. Conſcious of the rebuke he juſtly merited, Edward lowered his eyes, but raiſed the hand he ſtill held to his lips, then gently whiſpered—

"Oh

"Oh forgive me; and may the lovely niece of my benefactor be as happy as ſhe deſerves!"

He then ſuffered her to retire, and endeavoured to obtain more command over himſelf. William walked up to his friend, and, in the kindeſt manner, ſaid—

"My dear Forteſcue, no brother was ever more attached, or prouder of a ſiſter, than I am of mine. I am not blind, and, thank God, not unfeeling; therefore depend upon it I will not put the happineſs of Maria into the keeping of a coward. My uncle, you know, loves us all—you in particular: he wiſhed juſt now he had a daughter, that you might be more nearly allied to us; I am ſure, therefore, his wiſhes and mine turned to the ſame point, for you are the only man I ſhall ever cordially hail by the name of brother, and whom I am convinced my ſiſter——"

The reſt of the party juſt then rejoined the young men, which prevented William ſaying any more, or Edward from making any

any reply. Maria had gained ſome compoſure, and ventured to follow her mother; but avoided, as much as poſſible, the looks of the young Captain, who began to pace the room, and look out of the windows, to avoid his agitation being remarked, and at laſt caught up his hat, ſaying, in a hurried manner, he muſt go, or he ſhould loſe his place in the mail.

Captain Bloomfield, though rather a novice in ſuch matters, could not help obſerving the mutual agitation of Edward and his niece, and ſecretly reſolved, to do every thing in his power to promote their union, juſtly conceiving Maria would ſtand a far greater chance of being happy with a man of Forteſcue's ſtamp and character, than with the effeminate, though rich Downing; and his brother had obſerved, while out of the parlour, that the young hero, who did him ſo much honour, was a man of more conſequence than he had hitherto ſuppoſed, and a very ſingular, though evidently an excellent character.

"I only

"I only wiſh there were a few more ſuch," was the reply; "for ſurely no one can blame him for having too ſuſceptible feelings, and perhaps too refined a notion of the ſenſe of honour; though had he been my boy, I ſhould have gloried in him at the very time his prejudiced father drove him from home: for what an impreſſion muſt his harſh treatment have made upon the noble child who would rather have remained a priſoner at Boulogne, than have diſcloſed his family and name! I am convinced I ſhall never cordially like the man who threw ſuch a youth from him."

Maria caught thoſe laſt words, and was happy to find they were of the ſame way of thinking. Edward firſt took leave of his kind hoſt and hoſteſs, who both requeſted, in the moſt friendly manner, that he would ever conſider their houſe his home, fervently hoping he would ſoon return crowned with freſh laurels. He next approached Maria, collecting all his fortitude. Captain Bloomfield narrowly watched their countenances, and

and was more confirmed in his ſuſpicions, and more than ever reſolved that Downing ſhould ſpeedily be diſmiſſed, if his niece wiſhed it; or his brother and he ſhould not agree ſo well as they had done. Theſe were the reflections of the moment, while Edward took the trembling hand of his niece, and was raiſing it to his lips, when he haſtily exclaimed—

"Z——ds and d——n it! I hate kiſſing hands; ſuch ceremonies are too formal for me. Maria is a trueborn Engliſhwoman, my dear fellow, and totally free, I truſt, from affectation."

Forteſcue profited by this kind hint, and Maria readily preſented him her cheek, but in that way which ſeemed left to Edward's choice, and he impreſſed a very tender kiſs upon the ſweeteſt lips he had ever approached.—Unable to bid her any farther adieu, he haſtened out of the room, accompanied by the Captain and William, who walked with him into Lad Lane; his new ſervant Samuel rejoicing at the idea of going on board

board a man of war, bringing up the rear.—Very little paſſed during their walk; and as the coach was ready to ſtart, the Captain could only ſay, as Edward was ſtepping into the vehicle—

"Succeſs attend you, my brave boy!—Only remember, you may always command my beſt ſervices; therefore put me to the teſt without ſcruple," forcibly preſſing his hand as he concluded.—William alſo came forward, and catching hold of the other hand out of the window, deſired he would recollect what he had told him only a ſhort time before in Crutched Friars.—The guard called out, "Take care, gentlemen, we can't ſtop another moment."

Samuel had taken his ſeat upon the box with the coachman, the horn was ſounded, and they daſhed off in a moment, before Edward could make any reply to either of his beſt friends.

CHAP.

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CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

THREE other gentlemen were Edward's travelling companions, who was too much taken up with his own reflections to join in their diſcourſe during the firſt ſtage; as he could not help flattering himſelf Maria viewed him with a degree of partiality, which would certainly prevent her from giving her hand to Downing. Still ought he to aſpire to ſuch a treaſure? Why not, ſhould his father take him into favour again? or ſuppoſe he did not, if the Bloomfield family were ſatisfied with his conduct, his father could not deny him his birthright. He ought to have made ſome enquiries reſpecting his family; but he had put it off till

till too late; and as he did not expect it would be very long ere he returned, he ſoon came to a reſolution, when he did, to put his benefactor fully into his confidence; when, if Maria was ſtill ſingle, and Downing had given up his pretenſions, the Sheriff perhaps might not be averſe to his endeavouring to obtain her hand. The very hope raiſed his ſpirits, and enabled him to take a part in the converſation; and after a very agreeable journey, he reached Plymouth, and was received on board the Prince with three times three, every man ſtanding upon deck with a can of grog in his hand, provided by the firſt Lieutenant, who had been appointed to that poſt at the young hero's particular requeſt, as he was one of the Officers who had gone round the world with Captain Bloomfield, but had not accompanied him in his laſt voyage, and for whom Edward had ever felt the greateſt eſteem.

At the end of five days the young Captain once more committed himſelf to his favourite

favourite element, with a very fine breeze, bound for Cadiz, from whence he expected to proceed into the Mediterranean. He had a hundred men on board, over and above his own compliment, to distribute among the fleet. His own were all chosen, prime sailors, who were ambitious of serving under so generous, so brave, and so fortunate a Commander. The alterations he had ordered to be made in the rigging answered exceedingly well, he having before discovered why she sailed so heavily; and she was certainly one of the finest frigates in the Navy. Nor was Edward a little proud as he surveyed her from the quarter deck, when he reflected how honourably he had obtained the command. A smart breeze continued for six successive days, which brought them off Cape Finisterre, without their having once seen an enemy's vessel;—but at daybreak that morning, the Officer upon duty discerned two large ships, at the distance of five leagues. The Captain was instantly informed of the discovery he had made;

made; and as they approached, they perceived they were not only very large, but enemy's ſhips of war, as far as they could judge at ſuch a diſtance. Determined to be ſatisfied, the Captain made towards them, and as the day cleared, he ſoon came near enough to perceive the one was a Spaniſh man of war, of ſeventy-four guns; the other an Engliſh Eaſt Indiaman, her prize.

Being convinced of this, Edward took a little time for reflection: he could not engage ſo very ſuperior a force; and yet to ſuffer the Dons to ſhear off with ſo valuable a prize, without making an effort to releaſe ſo many of his countrymen, not to mention the ſervice he ſhould do the India Company by reſcuing ſo fine a ſhip from the Spaniards' clutches, would ſurely not be doing his duty; and not to be able to cope with a ſhip of the line, was truly mortifying to the young hero. Both ſhips appeared to ſail very heavily; particularly the Indiaman, which ſeemed to be deeply laden, and he could perceive had not ſurrendered without

without making an effort to eſcape being captured, as ſhe diſplayed ſeveral ſhot-holes in both hull and rigging.

The Spaniards had evidently ſuſtained ſome damage.—The Indiaman mounted only eight-and-twenty guns; ſhe muſt therefore have been bravely manned, the Captain obſerved, to have even attempted to make any reſiſtance, beginning to ſound his own crew, who inſtantly ſwore, one and all, they had nothing to fear from the Dons, though the odds were great; the ſight of ſuch a fine frigate was enough to make them tremble, and they longed to have a pop at her.

With ſuch ſentiments the Captain found he might venture to give orders to prepare for action; and he ſoon perceived, if he could not fight, he could run away, whichever beſt ſuited his purpoſe; by no means approving of the notion of ſome of his brave crew, who wiſhed to be laid alongſide the man of war, without conſidering the weight of her metal:—he therefore amuſed his antagoniſt a conſiderable time by his various manœuvres,

manœuvres, perſuading him he wiſhed to take ſome advantage, and now and then firing a few ſhots as he croſſed them, which the Spaniards were not ſlow in returning, though they always miſſed their aim.—He had ſhortened ſail, and kept the enemy in this ſtate of perplexity for ſeveral hours, who, conſcious of their ſuperior force, were very anxious to bring him to cloſe action, which was by no means Forteſcue's intention.

During this time the prize had crowded all her ſail, and was evidently making for the neareſt port. The young Captain ſuffered her to get ſeveral leagues a-head of them, while ſome of his crew began to grumble.—They foreſaw no good would be done by theſe manœuvres; but at laſt, when having put the enemy upon a wrong tack, by a ſucceſsful feint, which led them to ſuppoſe he was going to drop alongſide of them, he ordered every ſail to be ſet, and deſired the ſailing-maſter to make the beſt of his way after the Indiaman, which he came up with

in

in ſeven hours; while the Captain of the Spaniſh man of war, finding he had been outwitted, and aware of his deſign, followed him as ſpeedily as poſſible.

Edward's crew were more ſatisfied when they ſaw his deſign, while the Spaniards on board the prize began to tremble for their own ſituation, when they perceived how much their protector was out-ſailed; they made every preparation to reſiſt this unexpected attack, ſenſible they could not avoid a battle by running, the Britiſh frigate being ſo very ſuperior a ſailer. Forteſcue was perfectly aware of his impending danger, and knew that half an hour muſt decide the conteſt, as he had not gained more in the chace. He had many brave fellows, whom he aſſembled, and who knew how to execute the orders he gave them, and without firing more than one gun to bring them to, but which was not attended to, he dropped ſuddenly alongſide, and the grappling irons being all ready, boarded her almoſt inſtantly;—therefore in a few minutes the Spaniards,

Spaniards, unaccuſtomed and unequal to cope with our brave Tars, begged for quarter, which was immediately granted; and as the Captain did not doubt but ſome of the Engliſhmen belonging to the ſhip were confined on board, he gave immediate orders to have them ſet at liberty, and ſome of the Spaniards to be put into their places, ſending at leaſt one half of the latter on board his own ſhip.

The firſt Engliſhman who appeared upon deck, and whoſe countenance was at once expreſſive of joy and ſurpriſe, was a tall, ſlim gentleman, who appeared about ſixty. He caught the attention of the young Commander, who ſaid—

"You look like a countryman, Sir. From what part of India did you ſail? Where were you bound? Where was you taken? and how many Engliſh are there on board?"

"We ſailed from Calcutta, young gentleman," he replied; "and we were bound to London. This is one of the

richeſt laden veſſels the Company have received, or more properly hope to receive for ſome time. There are only five-and-twenty Engliſh ſailors on board this ſhip. We have been in the hands of the Spaniards five days; reſcue us, if poſſible, my brave countryman. I ſee your perilous ſituation; I promiſe you ten thouſand pounds, to be paid the moment I land in Great Britain."

"I require no bribe, my good Sir, to induce me to do my duty, which certainly is to endeavour to prevent your ſhip from again falling into the hands of the enemy; but as I cannot be anſwerable for my ſucceſs, if there is any thing of value, and not of very great bulk on board, I would adviſe it being removed as ſpeedily as poſſible into the frigate, as I can outſail, though I may not be able to cope with a ſhip of the line."

"I have conſiderable property on board, Captain, ſo well ſecured, that it has hitherto eſcaped the notice of the Spaniards, who removed every thing they thought of great value

value on board the man of war, with our Captain and ſeveral paſſengers, and two thirds of our crew. I know ſhe is a bad ſailer; but we were too deeply laden to get away, nor were we able to make a ſucceſsful defence, as you may perceive."

"Well, Sir, moments juſt now are precious; bring your property on board my ſhip as ſpeedily as poſſible," replied Forteſcue, who now greatly rejoiced he had ſo many hands on board he could ſpare, calling his firſt Lieutenant—"My dear George, we muſt not let the Dons regain this prize, if we can poſſibly prevent them; ſo ſtep on board her, take a hundred men with you—there are twenty-five Engliſhmen already there—and with that number I think you will be able to ſhew the Spaniards ſome ſport, and afford me great aſſiſtance; ſo we will let them come down upon us, and try whether we can't make them lower their colours."

"Moſt willingly I undertake to do my beſt," was the reply, and orders were given

accordingly; and while the men and under Officers were getting on board, and the Captain was arranging his plan of defence with his Lieutenant, as they had not ſufficient time allowed them to think of ſignals, the old gentleman came on board the frigate with his treaſures, which he had no ſooner diſpoſed of in a place of ſafety, than anxiouſly looking at the Captain, he exclaimed—

"I could not believe my own ears for ſome time; ſo young, my brave countryman, and yet entruſted with ſo important a command! Surely you are either a man of very ſuperior rank, or of uncommon talents. I am not abſolutely deficient in point of ſkill myſelf, therefore pray command my ſervices if I can be of any uſe."

"You are very kind, Sir, but I wiſh you to keep out of danger; for except I preſerve your life as well as your property, I ſhall not do you any very eſſential ſervice. The frigate, beſides, is well manned. Should I need your aſſiſtance, I will not ſcruple to ſend for you; at preſent I muſt requeſt you

you would take poſſeſſion of my cabin, where I hope ſoon to bring you the ſword of the Spaniſh Commander."

"I perceive, young hero, you are afraid I ſhould ſhare your glory; ſo God grant you ſucceſs, while I obey your injunctions. I muſt only obſerve, for your conſolation, that the enemy are ſhort of hands, I have been credibly informed, owing to ſickneſs, and their having been obliged to ſend their choſen men on board the prize."

"I am much obliged to you, Sir," replied Edward.—"I would now adviſe you to haſten below, and to ſtop your ears; for the enemy, you perceive, are preparing to give us a grand ſalute. My ſervant ſhall procure you any refreſhments you may chuſe or want. For the preſent, adieu!"

The old gentleman had ſcarcely left the deck before the engagement began. The Britiſh manœuvred with ſuch dexterity, as had been previouſly agreed upon, that they ſoon got the Spaniards between the frigate and the Indiaman, when the conteſt was

maintained with that ſteady bravery on the part of the Engliſh which they are ſo renowned for; and while every ſhot of their's told, the enemy, in their confuſion or bad judgment, perhaps both, ſeldom did any damage, except to their rigging. However, they kept up the conteſt for an hour and a half, during which they had been very roughly handled, and had loſt many of their men; and would have ſheared off, but they could not elude the Prince, unto whom, at laſt, they were obliged to lower their colours.

The Lieutenant on board the Indiaman performed his part of the duty with ſpirit, ſkill, and alacrity. He had plenty of ſtores on board, and his men, he obſerved, fought like Engliſhmen, the greateſt praiſe he could beſtow upon them; but no pen could do juſtice to the determined bravery of his young Captain, who, with a calm intrepidity, far above his years, gave his orders with a degree of preciſion which prevented the ſmalleſt confuſion on board his veſſel.

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The greater part of his crew underſtood even his looks; and convinced he was almoſt invincible, would have gone to the bottom with the colours flying, rather than have ſtruck to the enemy. They were in uncommon high ſpirits, and ſwearing it was nearly all up with the Dons, when they ſaw their colours lowered, and as inſtantly gave three loud and hearty cheers. This joyful ſalute brought the old gentleman again upon deck. Joy ſparkled in his eyes, while he flung his arms round the Captain, crying—

"You have done your duty nobly, my kind deliverer. I know I almoſt offend you by ſuppoſing any bribe I could offer would induce you to exert yourſelf in ſuch a cauſe; therefore I can only ſay I ſhall place ten thouſand pounds in your hands, to be diſtributed as you think proper among your Officers and men, who all ſeem to be, like yourſelf, invincible, and to all of whom I feel myſelf particularly indebted."

"We have none of us done more than our duty, my good Sir, and our ſucceſs, I am convinced, all deem a ſufficient recompence for their exertions. Beſides, we are entitled, you know, to no inconſiderable ſhare of prize-money; therefore let me adviſe you to beſtow your bounty upon the widows and orphans of the brave fellows who have fallen, and upon thoſe who are incapacitated from again ſerving their King and country, and from gaining their own livelihood;—but we are now going to take poſſeſſion of our prize. You would not wait below, as I deſired you, to receive the Spaniſh Captain's ſword."

"I would have ſhared your danger moſt willingly, brave youth; but God forbid I ſhould rob you of any honours. Excuſe the freedom of a total ſtranger; we may now be better acquainted."

"Your unfeigned joy and candour pleaſe me, my dear Sir. I am happy in having acquired ſuch a friend; you have doubtleſs many acquaintance on board our prize. Thoſe

Thoſe you moſt wiſh to ſee ſhall be ſent for immediately; but we cannot accommodate many. You muſt excuſe me for the preſent, as I have many duties to attend to: one in particular, which always afflicts me more than I can expreſs—I wiſh to ſee and comfort thoſe brave fellows who have been wounded during the action, to whom I will not forget to mention your generous promiſe."

"My eſteem for you increaſes every moment, Captain Forteſcue," replied the ſtranger, having learned his name from Samuel, who had been putting up moſt fervent prayers for his maſter's ſafety during the whole time of the engagement.—"I ſhall impatiently wait your leiſure in your cabin; when convenient, I wiſh moſt to ſee the Captain of the Indiaman, and two of the paſſengers, Mr. Gordon and Mr. Manwaring."

"They ſhall be brought on board with the Spaniſh Officers, Sir,' he replied, giving orders in conſequence; when he determined the men in the Indiaman ſhould

immediately go on board the man of war, as the crew of the former would now return to their own ſhip with their Officers.—He purpoſed to diſpatch them both to England when he purſued his voyage, conceiving few veſſels would dare to attack them, their ſuperior force, to outward appearance, conſidered.

The ſecond Lieutenant was, however, ſent to replace the firſt; and every other arrangement having been ſettled, the Spaniſh Officers, and one third of their crew, were brought on board the frigate, together with the Captain of the Indiaman, and the two paſſengers mentioned by the old gentleman. The meeting between theſe friends, after ſuch an unpleaſant ſeparation, may eaſily be conceived, as they had given up all thoughts of returning to England till they had firſt viſited a Spaniſh priſon, or at leaſt Spain;—and though the ſhip and moſt of the property was inſured, ſtill many of them would have ſuſtained a heavy loſs, had they remained in the poſſeſſion of the Spaniards, who

who conſoled themſelves with obſerving, that they had done their beſt to avoid the misfortunes which had befallen them.

"I have only this to ſay," remarked the Captain of the Indiaman, "had our brave deliverers been in a ſeventy-four, may I be d——d but they would have blown both ſhips out of the water."

In ſhort, it was difficult to diſtinguiſh the perſon who paid the young hero the moſt flattering compliments upon his ſkill, bravery, and intrepidity.—Edward had ever been cautioned by his benefactor never to liſten to flattery, as it had tarniſhed the glory of many a brave man; he was therefore always upon his guard.—His anſwers were modeſt and polite; but he ſoon quitted the happy party to attend to many neceſſary duties reſpecting the three ſhips now in his poſſeſſion, and the number of priſoners to be accommodated; after which he again joined them in his cabin.

The Spaniſh Captain, under pretence of fatigue, had retired with his ſurviving

Officers. Only Britiſh were now aſſembled. Their firſt tranſports over, Captain Forteſcue was received among them with that true diſtinction that is ſure to be paid to ſuperior merit; while the young Commander had alſo more leiſure to attend to the compliments addreſſed to him. The old gentleman he had firſt ſeen, appeared the man of the moſt conſequence, as the Captain and paſſengers, he had before obſerved, addreſſed him by the title of Governor; but now, on his return into the cabin, Edward could not help remarking that he ſeemed the leaſt happy among them, and fancied the ſort of melancholy ſilence which ſeemed to have taken poſſeſſion of him, aroſe from the laviſh promiſes he had made upon learning his ſucceſs;—he therefore very ſoon reverted to what then paſſed, which he now affected to conſider as a mere joke, till the Governor, who had liſtened to him with great attention, and perfectly underſtood his meaning, replied—

"Believe me, Captain, you have miſtaken the cauſe of my taciturnity; had I promiſed to diſtribute three times the ſum I mentioned among your crew, it would have been diſpoſing of no more than I could very well ſpare, without denying myſelf any of the luxuries this world affords, in moderation.—I am a ſingle man, and have made, or rather greatly increaſed my fortune in the Eaſt; for I came into poſſeſſion of landed property in England to the amount of fifteen hundred a year, at the death of my father: but having held a lucrative poſt in the Company's ſervice for the laſt fourteen years, I now ſuppoſe myſelf worth near as many thouſands per annum, which is more than I ſhall ver be able to ſpend, and much more than I want. However, it was honeſtly acquired, and not meanly ſcraped together; as I ever endeavoured to do honour to my ſituation and my country. Nor did I accept of the poſt I mention, merely to accumulate riches for myſelf. At that time I had heirs, whoſe fortune I wiſhed to increaſe—one in particular;

cular; and he may yet be living to enjoy what I would freely reſign this very moment, if that would reſtore him to his family.—About one third of my property is on board this very veſſel; and I would have given every ſhilling of it this morning, to have procured my releaſe; therefore truſt me, my amiable young friend, I do not regret having diſpoſed of ten thouſand pounds:—but as I am convinced I ſhall never be able to recompenſe you as I could wiſh, methinks I would fain make myſelf an intereſt in your friendſhip; therefore, if you are inclined to liſten to the ſtory of an old man, I will account for that want of ſpirits which led you to ſuppoſe I was ungenerous enough to regret having promiſed to part with a little droſs, to relieve the wants of my fellow-creatures. Neither Captain Anderſon, nor my friends Gordon and Manwaring, are perfectly acquainted with my ſtory; therefore the recital will not to them appear tedious."

"I ſhall eſteem myſelf favoured by your communication, Sir," replied Forteſcue;—"and

" and will be as anſwerable for the diſcretion of my friend," alluding to the firſt Lieutenant, who was preſent, " as for my own."

" The brave are proverbially diſcreet, Captain; but I have no ſecrets to relate." He therefore commenced his narrative as follows.

CHAP. VIII.

" My father was left a widower early in life with two ſons. I might have told you that he was the younger ſon of a Nobleman, but that, having married againſt the conſent of my grandfather, he became rather an alien to his family. I had attained my ſixteenth year, when he thought of making a ſecond choice, as his circumſtances were rather confined; and a rich widow in the neighbour-

neighbourhood was very much inclined to improve them, which ſhe did on condition he would ſend his ſons from home, not chuſing we ſhould benefit by her generoſity. Fortunately for me, an opportunity offered of ſending me out to India with tolerable proſpects; while my brother, who was two years younger, was entered a midſhipman on board a man of war.

"The lady, however, did not long ſurvive our baniſhment from the paternal manſion, and her fortune, I truſt, conſoled my father for my abſence; as I never thoroughly digeſted having been ſent from home merely to humour her caprice. He paid the debt of nature about ſixteen years ago, leaving me ſole heir to his landed property; and I returned to England perfectly ſatisfied with that, and what I had already acquired in India, reſolving to marry, and turn gentleman farmer upon my own eſtate.

"To my brother, then a Captain in the Navy, my father had bequeathed ten thouſand pounds; and he had received half as much

much with his wife, who was the younger daughter of a Peer who had abjured the errors of Catholiciſm upon coming to his title: but this had not ſo far enlarged his mind as to induce him to forgive my ſiſter-in-law for having married a man he conſidered as ſo much his inferior; though his diſpleaſure did not extend to her children, of whom he was very fond, and who were frequently at his houſe. My brother and I had long been upon terms of the ſtrongeſt amity; he therefore ſincerely rejoiced to ſee me return, and introduced me to his wife, a moſt amiable woman, and three fine boys and a girl. I would fain have perſuaded them to relinquiſh the ſmall houſe they inhabited, and take up their abode with me; but they wiſhing to ſee me married, would only become my gueſts;—however, I was in no violent haſte to part with my liberty; nor did I ſee any lady, in whoſe keeping I judged it prudent to entruſt my happineſs.

"My brother's children became the objects of my tendereſt affection, and I ceaſed

to

to wiſh for any of my own. His eldeſt ſon was at this period a fine youth of thirteen; the ſecond a ſturdy rogue between nine and ten; and my greateſt favourite was an urchin only ſix years old. The girl was three years younger; they had already buried ſeveral, and were very likely to have more. I grew, however, ſo very partial to little Frank, that I was never ſo well pleaſed as when he was preſent. I know not how it was, but I had got it into my head, and was frequently prognoſticating he would be a great man; nor was I ſingular in my notions, for his maternal grandfather conſidered him as the wonder of his age. My brother agreed he was a fine, lively boy, fit for his own profeſſion, for which he intended him, but too volatile and too fond of miſchief; though at times, in the pride of his heart, when he has witneſſed any trait of courage in the youngſter far ſuperior to his age and ſtature, he would exclaim—

'Frank will certainly be a hero.'

"I had

" I had been about twelve months in England when I was ſolicited by the India Company to accept of the lucrative poſt I have juſt given up, they having a very high opinion of my integrity, and it being an office of great truſt. I conſulted with my brother, who was very averſe to my returning, alledging, if I did not marry, I had more than enough; and if I did, I ſhould moſt likely connect myſelf with ſome woman of fortune;—therefore why ſpend the prime of my life at a diſtance from my family, and in an unhealthy climate? I was tired of an idle life, I replied, and was leſs than ever inclined to marry and domeſticate: however, I promiſed to take a ſhort time for reflection, though I was very much inclined to cloſe with the Company's propoſals. That very evening, as I was taking my accuſtomed walk with my youthful favourite, I aſked him, in a ſportive way, if he would go to India with me.

'Yes, uncle,' if you will take papa and mama, my brothers and ſiſter.'

'Then

'Then you won't go with me alone? I thought you loved me, Frank?

'So I do, uncle.—I would go with all my heart, if I could fight thoſe black people you have been at war with, and then I might get a large bag of money for papa;—for grandpapa told me people made fortunes there, and then you know he need not ſay, 'Take care of your new coat, for I don't know when I ſhall be able to buy you another.'—Beſides, you know, brother John might go to a military academy. Papa ſays it is too expenſive, and yet I know John longs to be a ſoldier, that he might go to America to fight the French; but I had rather be a ſailor, like papa.'

'Why, all your thoughts ſeem to center in papa and John; don't you think you ought to ſave a little of this money for yourſelf?'

'Oh no, uncle; you told me one day, when I knew what to do with money, you would give me plenty; and if you wiſh it, I will

I will go with you to India: but you told me once people were all ſoldiers there, and I had rather be a ſailor. Why an't you one? You ſhould ſee then how I would fight for you.'

"I muſt entreat the company would excuſe my repeating the prattle of a mere baby; but it was, I verily believe, what decided me to return to Calcutta, to enrich this generous boy, whom I could hardly bear to part with. The decided preference, however, he gave to the ſea ſervice made me reſolve he ſhould follow the bent of his own inclination, taking upon myſelf to educate, maintain, and wholly provide for him, depoſiting, before I left England, five thouſand pounds in my brother's hands, for the ſole uſe of my beloved Francis, to put it out of my power, in caſe I changed my mind, and ſhould marry, not to render him, in ſome reſpects, independent. I alſo gave up my houſe to my dear William, appointing him my ſteward and ſole manager of all I left behind

behind me. I alſo made him promiſe, in three years, to ſend his ſon John to Calcutta, for whom I knew I ſhould have it in my power to provide according to his merits. Suffice it to ſay, I returned to India, and, at the appointed time, my nephew John, a fine youth of ſeventeen, joined me. From him I learned that his ſecond brother was juſt gone out with his father, who had the command of a frigate, and that my beloved Francis was at an academy not far from home.

" More intereſted than ever for my little darling, I made the moſt minute enquiries reſpecting him, and had the ſatisfaction to find he continued to verify my former prognoſtics;—therefore judge what were my feelings when my brother, about four years after, wrote me word he had loſt his incomparable boy, he ſcarcely knew how; nor could he even gueſs where he was gone, but hoped he had, by ſome means or other, joined me in India, acknowledging he had, in a fit of paſſion, his conduct having been groſſly

groſſly and purpoſely miſrepreſented to him, ſaid ſomething which had made ſo deep an impreſſion upon the noble youth, that he immediately left his houſe, from which time he had never been able to gain the leaſt intelligence reſpecting him, if he excepted a few lines addreſſed to his mother, which had been put into the poſt-office in London, merely to inform her he was well, and that he would take care of himſelf; the date of which led him to hope he had prevailed on either officers or men to receive him on board ſome of the Indiamen, knowing the true bent of his inclination. But, alas! he was miſtaken in his conjectures—at leaſt he never reached Calcutta.—Sweet fellow! what hardſhips may he not have undergone, and what can have become of him? for I know no more at this preſent moment than when I received the heart-breaking intelligence of his having eloped. I greatly pity, though I cannot abſolutely excuſe my brother, as I am fearful my beloved boy rather loſt ground in his eſteem from the moment

moment he became my greateſt favourite. However, he has been very ſeverely puniſhed, admitting he did act wrong, though he is yet unconſcious of his recent loſs.—Three years ago he loſt his wife, whoſe father had been dead ſome time, and whoſe three brothers paid the debt of nature within a very ſhort time of each other. A ſort of hereditary decline proved fatal to two of them; an accident to the third, by which means, in failure of male iſſue, the title and eſtates of Lord Caſtle Cary centered in my eldeſt nephew, who, dreadful to relate, was killed in a duel about a twelvemonth ſince; he died in my arms!

"So melancholy an event rendered Calcutta hateful to me: I therefore reſolved to break the woeful tidings to his unfortunate father, and truſted my preſence and conſolation would mitigate his ſorrow, taking every precaution to prevent his ſon's death reaching his ears by any other means. But, alas! the meaſure of his woe was not completed; his ſecond ſon, who was Lieutenant on board a man

a man of war, got appointed to one of the ſhips going upon the India ſtation, purpoſely to ſee his brother and me. He arrived at Calcutta about ſeven months ago.

"I had no ſooner expreſſed my joy to ſee him, than he enquired after his dear John, now Lord Caſtle Cary, and who he expected was on the point of ſailing for England. My looks gave him the melancholy intelligence, and his feelings upon the occaſion did honour to the goodneſs of his heart, as neither the title nor eſtates he gained by his brother's untimely death ſeemed at all to conſole him for his loſs.—He foreſaw how much afflicted his poor father would be, and was very happy when he learned I intended to be myſelf the bearer of the intelligence to England. Unfortunately, this young man fell a ſacrifice to the climate within a month after his arrival;—therefore, my good friends, think what I have undergone of late, and what a taſk I have ſtill upon my hands, as my brother is totally ignorant of the death of both his

ſons, at leaſt I hope ſo; for afflicting as is my tale, I had rather he ſhould hear the news from me than from an indifferent perſon:—and Oh! that I could but firſt diſcover the retreat of, or even what is become of my darling, Francis!—If he does but live, he would have no right to murmur at the will of Providence; but I fear my brother was jealous of the affection I bore his charming child, for he was no other when we parted: and how freely would I beſtow half my fortune at this moment upon any one who would conduct him to my arms! But he was not ſufficiently ſought after when he firſt abſconded, and muſt long, ere this, have conſidered himſelf as neglected. Why did not the youthful wanderer ſeek a refuge in my arms? But I ought to have returned to England the moment I received my brother's letter: I could then have deviſed ſome means to trace his ſteps. Now it is impoſſible. His daughter may ſtill, in ſome meaſure, conſole her unhappy father; ſhe muſt now be my heir, ſhould my reſearches after

after her brother prove fruitleſs. I am told ſhe is a very fine girl, but ſhe will never conſole me for my loſt Francis.

At this moment the whole party were alarmed by a deep groan, and they perceived the young Captain had either fallen aſleep, or into a fit, upon a ſofa, in the darkeſt corner of the cabin, where he had ſeated himſelf when the Governor entered upon his ſtory. Hardly knowing what to think, they all approached him, and were now convinced he was recovering from a fit. His Lieutenant was fearful he had been wounded, and had not acknowledged it, for fear of damping the joy of the company.—Others thought his illneſs proceeded from fatigue. Every means was, however, uſed for his recovery, and the ſurgeon was inſtantly ſent for, who was preparing to bleed him, when he opened his eyes, which no longer beamed with their wonted luſtre; and after a melancholy ſigh, fixed them ſtedfaſtly upon the Governor, who ſtood very near him, and now ſaid—

"I hope, my brave deliverer, my melancholy tale has not thus affected you, as I know the moſt intrepid men are generally the moſt ſuſceptible of the ſofter feelings of humanity."

"Favour me with your name, Governor," he faintly articulated; "though I have hardly a doubt——"

"Warrington," he haſtily replied.

"My uncle!" was all the agitated Edward could ſay to be underſtood, making an effort to extend his arms. The good old man inſtantly fell on his knees by the ſide of the ſofa, when, catching his beloved nephew in his arms, he raiſed his eyes to Heaven in mental thankſgiving for a few ſeconds; then turning to the object of his fondeſt ſolicitude, he again preſſed him to his throbbing boſom, and when he could ſpeak, with tears rolling down his aged cheeks, he cried—

"You have more than fulfilled my former prognoſtics; but do, deareſt boy, relieve my anxious mind.—Why are you called

called Forteſcue? Does your father know you are living?"

"No, no, my deareſt uncle," replied the ſtill aſtoniſhed Captain.—"I know I have been greatly to blame, but——"

Tears choked his utterance, and flinging his arms round his uncle's neck, they remained locked in the moſt fervent embrace for ſeveral moments;—nor was there a dry eye in the cabin; every one preſent congratulated both with the moſt heartfelt ſincerity, as ſoon as they were ſufficiently recovered to attend to what was paſſing around them:—then preſuming they might have many private matters to talk over, the firſt Lieutenant ſetting the example, they all left the cabin, and the uncle and nephew *téte-à-téte*, when the former requeſted his dear Francis would tell him every thing that had befallen him from the time he left Aſhdale, the name of the ſeat where his father reſided.

CHAP. IX.

AS the reader is already acquainted with many of thoſe details the young hero now entered into, we ſhall merely elucidate ſome few things that may have appeared rather problematical. For inſtance, the warm reception he met with from his grandfather's brother, Profeſſor Forteſcue, who zealouſly hoped, though he very cautiouſly avoided coming too ſoon to the point, to perſuade his young *protegé* to change his religion, that at leaſt one deſcendant of their ancient family might tranſmit their name, unſullied by apoſtacy, to poſterity; he was therefore not only happy in the idea, but very cautiouſly prevented his having reached Douai from

from coming to Captain Warrington's ears; and had alſo adviſed him to drop his firſt and laſt name, the better to preſerve his *incognito*, the youth having been chriſtened Francis Edward Forteſcue Warrington. We muſt alſo, as we pique ourſelves upon our veracity, acknowledge Captain Warrington was rather jealous of the unbounded love his brother profeſſed for little Frank, whoſe riſing virtues and ſpirited conduct he therefore viewed with a jaundiced eye, ever treating him with unneceſſary ſeverity; for it was one of his maxims never to ſhew favour to any particular child, which might be as praiſeworthy in the father, as the reverſe was excuſable in the uncle. He had, however, repented ſeverely having drove him from home, which was very far from being his intention; particularly as he ſoon diſcovered his conduct had been groſſly miſrepreſented by the Juſtice: nor was the ſupineneſs of the maſter of the Academy, and his tame acquieſcence with his landlord's injuſtice, leſs puniſhed, as the

major part of his ſcholars openly declared they would no longer remain under the controul of a man, who delegated the chief part of his authority into other hands, and who had expelled his beſt ſcholar to oblige an arbitrary tyrant:—and ſo firmly did they perſiſt in their reſolution, and avowed abhorrence of the Juſtice, that their parents took up the matter very warmly, and after inveſtigating it properly, removed them to other ſchools. It may therefore be ſuppoſed Captain Warrington did not eſcape his ſhare of cenſure, as the young Francis was a general favourite; nor, as his brother had obſerved, had he gone unpuniſhed.

The reader will ſuppoſe how warmly Edward, for ſuch we ſhall continue to call him, expatiated upon his many obligations to his beloved benefactor; hinting that to call him uncle, would crown his felicity; and he truſted, were his lovely niece unmarried when he returned, neither her father nor her uncle would object to his making her an offer of his hand.

The

The Governor took upon himſelf to anſwer for his brother's conſent, who had certainly, in ſome reſpect, forfeited his claims upon his ſon's obedience, reminding his beloved Francis that he was now Lord Caſtle Cary, and entitled to an ample fortune.

"I don't, however, mean to aſſume that title, my dear Sir, till I have obtained my father's forgiveneſs. I know you think us both in the wrong; but what moſt conſoles me, and which will have its proper weight with a man of honour, is the conſciouſneſs that I have not diſgraced the name of Forteſcue, and I ſhall continue to bear it for the preſent. Your friends are diſcreet, and I can anſwer for my friend Montgomery. I will therefore merely inform the reſt of the Officers, and my ſhip's crew, that I have very unexpectedly met with an uncle, without entering into any farther details. Indeed I ſhall regret parting with a name, under which I have hitherto been ſo ſucceſsful."

"Be it as you pleaſe, my dear Edward, for I ſhall conform to your wiſhes.—

How little did I think, when I fell into the hands of the Spaniards, ſo great a misfortune was the forerunner of the greateſt happinneſs I ever experienced! But pray let the crew of every ſhip participate in my joy: I would have even our enemies rejoice upon ſuch an occaſion."

To this Edward readily agreed; and the Captain of the Indiaman, Meſſrs. Gordon and Manwaring, and Lieutenant Montgomery, being informed Lord Caſtle Cary choſe to remain Captain Forteſcue till he returned to England, they required no farther injunction to keep his rank a ſecret. After ſpending a jovial evening, in toaſting wives and ſweethearts, the party ſeparated. Edward inſiſted upon his uncle taking poſſeſſion of his bed, which was of courſe the beſt the frigate afforded, himſelf accepting that of his friend Montgomery. The other ſtrangers were accommodated as well as circumſtances would permit; and perhaps no two on board ſlept ſo little as the Governor and his nephew. The moſt ſanguine wiſhes of

of the former were far more than fulfilled, and he reſolved never more to part from his darling Edward, who, in his turn, could ſcarcely credit the occurrences of the paſt evening: even the freſh glory he had acquired aſtoniſhed him. And would theſe very great changes in his circumſtances lead to the poſſeſſion of Maria Bloomfield?—Would that puppy Downing be diſmiſſed? Would ſhe give him her hand, if ſhe preferred another? Surely not:—and now that he ſhould give her rank, and was already richer than the man her father had ſelected, the Sheriff could have no objection. And might not his benefactor think himſelf ſomewhat repaid for his kindneſs towards him, ſhould no unforeſeen event prevent his niece from forming ſuch an alliance? As he was ſtill determined to ſend his prize and the Indiaman to England, he could requeſt his kind uncle would call upon his beſt friend, and enter into every neceſſary explanation; though, except Downing was

diſmiſſed, and that before Maria was aware of his ſuperior rank, he reſolved never to ſeek her hand.

At daybreak he roſe and went upon deck, but little had been done during the night towards repairing the damages either of the ſhips had ſuſtained; though both officers and men had kept a good look-out. He ſoon ordered all hands to enter upon this important duty; and as he found all the ſailors belonging to the Indiaman either on board their own ſhip, or the man of war, ſhe was ſoon well manned again, and the Captain readily took charge of one third of the Spaniards; another third he left on board their own ſhip, under the care of the hundred ſupernumeraries, and what other hands he could very well ſpare to navigate her to England, under the command of his ſecond Lieutenant, to whom he entruſted his diſpatches. Having made all his arrangements, he told his uncle he did not conceive he would have any thing to fear on board either of the ſhips; he dared not return

return with them, as it was abſolutely neceſſary the ſtores he had on board ſhould be diſtributed as ſpeedily as poſſible among the Mediterranean Fleet, elſe he would not propoſe their parting company.

"Nor can I conſent to leave you, my dear boy. I will write a letter to my brother, convinced my having found you will greatly conſole him for the loſs of his other ſons; and my friend Gordon will, I know, deliver it in perſon, and enter into many details I ſhall thus be enabled to curtail; for I ſhall remain a volunteer on board your ſhip;—and don't fancy I ſhall again be kept below in any future engagement, as I will ſhare both your danger and glory. You can accommodate my two faithful blacks. I want no other attendance; but *a-propos* to your father—I believe I forgot to put the queſtion laſt night; he was in employ, I know, at the commencement of the war—is he now?"

"I really can't reſolve your queſtion, my dear Sir. I have never dared, would you believe

believe it, to examine a Navy liſt ſince I have had it ſo fully in my power to gratify my curioſity."

"Well, my dear Edward, all things conſidered, it does not ſurpriſe me. I will addreſs him at Aſhdale. Should he not be there, my letter will certainly follow him to any other place, and the trifling delay this may occaſion, can be of no material conſequence."

"But I really am fearful you will repent accompanying me into the Mediterranean. I may be ſtationed there for ſome time, and we have not the ſame luxuries on board; you doubtleſs had in the veſſel you were taken in. Beſides, I left England with full permiſſion to fight any enemy's ſhips which may fall in my way, and may not always be ſo fortunate as I was yeſterday:—therefore, much as I ſhould enjoy your company, I cannot be ſo ſelfiſh as to preſs you to remain with me."

"Then I ſhall remain without permiſſion; for neither dangers nor difficulties ſhall drive me from your ſide,

ſide, where, if I fall, you will ſee the laſt of me. My will is already made, and requires no alteration, as I have already conſtituted you my heir, being determined to find you if you were above ground; and I will, ſince Providence has been ſo kind to me, either preſent you to my brother upon our arrival in England, or follow you to the grave; for I am convinced I ſhould not long ſurvive you, were you to fall in defence of your country, which God in his wondrous mercy forbid! But you are not invulnerable; more's the pity."

Finding him thus determined, Edward made no farther objections, but merely requeſted him to prepare his packet as expeditiouſly as poſſible, as he ſhould ſend his friends on board the Indiaman as ſoon as they had received that, and his final inſtructions, as ſhe would be ready to ſail by that time; hinting his wiſhes that he would write a few lines to his benefactor, to thank him for the favours beſtowed upon his nephew, but without mentioning his rank, as

he

he did not even wiſh the Bloomfield family ſhould be yet made acquainted with it.—The Governor nodded acquieſcence, and retired to write to his brother and Captain Bloomfield.

Edward took the ſame opportunity to write to the latter and William, briefly informing them he had very unexpectedly diſcovered his uncle, Governor Warrington, on board an Eaſt Indiaman which he had retaken from the Dons, concluding, "As he is my father's elder brother, I am ſure I need not add, I am the third ſon of Captain Warrington, who has long been a brother officer of my dear patron's;" referring them for further particulars to Mr. Gordon, to whom he gave both his letters, entreating he would deliver them himſelf, but not give either of the gentlemen the leaſt hint of his rank.

The old gentleman, who was his uncle's friend, promiſed to go into Crutched Friars within an hour after he reached London; which was the leaſt, he obſerved, he could

do

do for his kind deliverer. He alſo readily promiſed to carry the Governor's letter to Aſhdale, and of courſe to deliver his other to Captain Bloomfield, which exactly met his nephew's approbation, as it was expreſſive of the real eſteem he felt for that gentleman, and of his gratitude for his paſt favours to his beloved boy, who would probably have been no more, but for his humane interceſſion in his favour at Boulogne. It was, in ſhort, exactly calculated to gratify the feelings of the honeſt veteran; and Mr. Gordon was deſired to aſſure him that the Governor hoped to be received among the number of his friends, when he returned to England. That gentleman was then ſent on board the Indiaman, from which all the Governor's baggage and ſtores had been brought; and about three in the afternoon the ſhips parted company, under favour of a fine breeze, and two days more brought the frigate off Cadiz, where Edward received his final inſtructions from the Commander in

Chief

Chief upon that ſtation, who highly approved of every thing he had done reſpecting his prize, and congratulated him very warmly upon the freſh laurels he had won; and then ordered him to make the beſt of his way after that part of the fleet which had already ſailed up the Streights in queſt of the French, as they were greatly in want of ſeveral of the articles he had on board, part of which was diſtributed among thoſe ſhips which continued to block up that port. He was alſo relieved from his priſoners, and received general diſcretionary orders to act as circumſtances would permit, having given ſuch proofs of his prudence and ſkill. He now continued his voyage, which we ſhall ſuffer him to purſue, while we return into Crutched Friars.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

NO ſooner had Edward left London, than the boaſting Medmore took occaſion to obſerve he fancied his late ſucceſſes were more owing to the bravery of his crew than his own courage, as he had rather flinched when put to the trial upon land. Theſe aſſertions, however, did not produce the deſired effect; and a quarrel taking place between him and his ſecond, the latter, convinced he had nothing to fear from his valour, made the real truth public, not ſcrupling to affirm that Medmore would have aſked pardon on his knees, rather than have fought Captain Forteſcue.

This

This diſcovery afforded no one a greater triumph than Downing, who declared he had long been convinced Captain Medmore's courage ſoon evaporated; hinting he ſhould himſelf have called him to an account the following day, when he was ſober, if Captain Forteſcue had not ſaved him the trouble; but that gentleman's account, which was afterwards confirmed, of his behaviour in Hyde-Park, had ſince made him conſider him beneath his notice. This was repeated perhaps with a trifling addition to Medmore by ſome of his companions, who longed to ſet him and Downing by the ears, convinced they were both rank cowards.

The ſwaggering Captain, who began to dread a diſmiſſion from his corps, and foreſaw his reputation was likely to ſuffer, bluſtered with more vehemence than ever concerning what he would do; but unfortunately buſineſs of the utmoſt conſequence called him into the country at this critical moment; however when he returned, he ſwore he

he would make that little impudent fop eat his words, and aſk his pardon into the bargain; nay, relinquiſh his pretenſions to Miſs Bloomfield, whom he proteſted he would marry in ſpite of man or devil. This vapouring had by no means the deſired effect, and his abrupt departure was a convincing proof he had no intentions to vindicate his honour; but at the expiration of ten days he returned, and went as uſual to the coffee-houſe he generally frequented, where the former affair had ſo often been talked over, and where he found himſelf generally ſhunned: and was told, by a pretended friend, it was in contemplation among the officers of his regiment, to requeſt he would reſign his commiſſion.

Worked up to the greateſt pitch of fury, to have his honour called in queſtion, he publicly declared his recent journey had merely been a preparatory ſtep to his challenging Downing, as he had ſome affairs to ſettle that no man of prudence would have left in diſorder, and which muſt have been

the

the caſe, ſhould he fall in the conteſt: and he certainly never heard of life being inſured upon ſuch occaſions;—he therefore diſpatched a far more pompous challenge than he had ſent to our hero, requeſting Downing to renounce his pretenſions to Miſs Bloomfield, to retract every thing he had ſaid to his diſhonour, or to meet him the next morning at five at Kenſington Gravel-pits, with a brace of piſtols.—The poor man, who had of late met with a very cool reception in Crutched Friars, had been politely told that morning by the Sheriff, that his daughter appeared at preſent ſo averſe to matrimony, he muſt decline preſſing her either upon the ſubject, or in his favour; requeſting he would continue to viſit as a friend, though he could no longer receive him as his daughter's lover. Greatly mortified, had he dared, he would have hazarded a few reflections, which might have drawn a challenge alſo from William, which conſideration enabled him to keep a guard

guard upon his tongue. To be therefore thus addreſſed by Medmore was particularly provoking.

Having read his pompous epiſtle, he promiſed to ſend him an anſwer in the courſe of the evening; and as ſoon as he had got rid of the perſon who had delivered it, a well-known bullying fellow, whom Medmore, in default of his former friend, had ſelected for his ſecond, he ſent for ſeveral of his particular friends, in hopes they would adviſe his requeſting the aſſiſtance of the peace-officers, when, to his infinite aſtoniſhment, they were all unanimous for his accepting the challenge; alledging Medmore was a known coward, therefore his hand would ſhake ſo much, that it was a chance if he would be able to draw the trigger of his piſtol; and, at all events, he would never hold the weapon ſtraight.—Beſides, to have recourſe to the law or the conſtables, would totally blaſt his own character as a man of ſpirit; and he muſt know, by Medmore's behaviour to Captain Forteſcue,

Forteſcue, that he would do any thing rather than fight, when it came to the pinch.

Downing, however unwilling to do him that juſtice, could not but acknowledge that the young ſailor was conſtitutionally brave; and Medmore muſt know that the ſight of a piſtol would not frighten a man who frequently faced a cannon. He found, however, he had no alternative but to fight, or retract many degrading things he had ſaid publicly of Medmore, while he was confident, in his own mind, he had nothing to dread; for as for giving up the lady, that he had already been obliged to do, and ſecretly wiſhed his antagoniſt had known it before. He condemned the caprices of ſuch ſilly romantic girls, and wiſhed he had never ſeen Maria Bloomfield; but preſſed by his friends, who dictated the anſwer, as Captain Medmore's had done the challenge, no two billets of the kind were ever more pompouſly worded; and the latter concluded by aſſuring Captain Medmore he ſhould be punctual to the time

time and place appointed the following morning, with a caſe of piſtols and a ſecond.

The little man had one great conſolation when he reflected upon the bulk of his antagoniſt.—Allowing he ſtood his ground, the odds were at leaſt three to two in his favour. Nevertheleſs, he wiſhed to take every precaution; therefore provided himſelf with a tried pair of piſtols, a very ſkilful ſurgeon, and an experienced ſecond, who had attended ſeveral gentlemen, at leaſt ſo he ſaid, upon ſuch occaſions, and they had all come off conquerors.

Thus amply provided, and by way of diſplaying an exceſs of courage, he choſe to be at the place appointed five minutes before the time. Nor was Medmore leſs punctual, as each ſecretly hoped either to terrify the other by his impatience, or to have the ſupreme pleaſure of poſting him for a coward in the various coffee-houſes they frequented. The ſeconds having proceeded to meaſure the ground, the affair became

more ſerious than was expected by either party. The Captain wore his martial hat, which he put on the ſide cock before, and marched at a diſtance with a menacing air. The little man ſtrutted, and loſt not one jot of his height, effecting to hum a tune, while every now and then he glanced an indignant look at his adverſary.

Thus did each diſplay his bravery, which we muſt confeſs was faſt oozing out at their fingers' ends. The moſt experienced ſecond propoſed ten paces, as that was the general diſtance, but Medmore's friend thought twelve quite near enough; obſerving his principal aim was honour, not murder.—The other agreed to this propoſal, and the ground was meaſured out. The antagoniſts took their ſtations, and were informed it had been agreed they ſhould fire at the ſame moment, upon the dropping of a handkerchief.

Downing ſaid it was all very well; but whether he firſt diſcovered the ſignal, or whether, owing to his trepidation, he preſſed too

too hard upon the trigger of his weapon, certain it is his piſtol went off before Medmore was abſolutely in a poſture of defence; who, thrown off his guard by this accident, ſprung forward ſeveral ſteps, and took ſuch good aim, that he lodged the contents of his piſtol in his adverſary's lungs, who inſtantly fell never to riſe again, Downing's ſecond vehemently declaring that foul play had been practiſed.

Conſcious of the juſtice of the aſſertion, Medmore took to his heels, while both the ſurgeons ran to the aſſiſtance of the wounded man, whom they pronounced to be dying, and who actually did expire in being lifted into the coach which had brought him:—his friends were of courſe obliged to be informed how he came by his death; and as they were people of the firſt eminence in the City, and among its richeſt inhabitants, they vowed no money ſhould be ſpared to bring the villain to juſtice: and being unacquainted with what had paſſed the preceding day in Crutched Friars, they perſuaded themſelves

that every precaution ought to be taken before the melancholy tidings were communicated to Miſs Bloomfield. Some experienced matrons were therefore choſen ambaſſadreſſes, and departed to break the news firſt to her mother, and then to the young lady; while meſſengers were diſpatched in various directions after Medmore, to whoſe houſe the neareſt relations of the defunct immediately proceeded with the officers of juſtice, where they could learn no tidings of its frightened maſter. A ſervant, who always attended him when he travelled, in the double capacity of groom and valet, was ſummoned, and cloſely queſtioned without being informed of what had befallen the Captain. He knew no more than any of the reſt where he was gone. The horſes were in the ſtables, therefore he preſumed he had not left town.

"Where has he been for the laſt ten days?" aſked Alderman Bulford, ſeconded by thoſe moſt anxious to revenge the young man's death.

The

The ſervant, alarmed as much by looks as words, wondered what made gentlemen of ſuch conſequence ſo very inquiſitive; and at laſt, fearing he might be brought into trouble, upon hearing the party whiſper, "He will certainly be hanged if he is taken," he declared he would unfold all he knew, if they would allow him to go up ſtairs, and fetch a coat, which would be a proof he ſpoke truth. They accordingly permitted him, wondering what a coat could have to do with the lad's confeſſion.

He ſoon made his appearance with one upon his arm, which he held up to the light, requeſting the company to ſurvey it well. They did as he deſired, and perceived it had been perforated by bullets in at leaſt a hundred places.

"This, gentlemen," ſaid he, "is the coat which he uſed to ſhoot at.—"I am ſure I did not know he had any bad intentions in ſo doing."

More and more aſtoniſhed, they deſired the lad to explain his meaning rather more

clearly, who then told them that, for the laſt ten days, his maſter and himſelf had only been riding about the country, ſleeping at different inns every night; and at every private place they came to, he uſed to diſmount, and ſtick up his coat for a mark to ſhoot at, which he did ſo frequently, that at laſt he could hit it nine times out of ten, at twelve yards diſtance.—The reaſon why the cowardly raſcal had taken his late journey, therefore, became very evident:—but not to tire our readers with repeating the juſt execrations he drew upon himſelf, we will only ſay he had the good fortune to reach an unfrequented port without being overtaken, from whence he embarked for Denmark, and has ever ſince remained an exile from his native country, deſpiſed by thoſe people among whom he is forced to remain; while many of thoſe gay young men, who had been the chief promoters of what they thought a good joke, made reſolutions never again to try to ſet either cowards or fools by the ears.

Thus

Thus was Maria effectually ſecured from the perſecutions of poor Downing, and the impertinent addreſſes of the leſs amiable Medmore; but ſhe was ſeriouſly hurt when ſhe learned their duel had been ſolely attributed to her charms, notwithſtanding her brother averred that Downing had been diſmiſſed before he ever received Medmore's challenge. However, the real vexation this adventure gave her, added to the fears ſhe could not help entertaining for the object of her affections, ſoon robbed her of her fine natural bloom, particularly as ſhe did not dare to hope ſhe ſhould ever, ſhould he return in ſafety, become the wife of Edward, little imagining the unexpected revolution which had taken place in his circumſtances.—The family had removed to Weſton for the ſummer, previous to the duel which had terminated Downing's exiſtence; and there her father, brother, and uncle daily dined.—Indeed neither the Sheriff nor the Captain went every day to London, as William now

was acting partner; and ſo high an opinion had the Sheriff of his gay ſon's talents and prudence to get money, that he had declared his intention of giving up his town houſe and buſineſs entirely when his ſon married; for he was rich enough, and would enjoy himſelf:—but his brother offered him a good wager, if he did give up buſineſs (and he very much encouraged the notion), he would repent before ſix months were at an end; for he himſelf ſoon found, by experience, a man of buſineſs could not be happy without ſomething to do.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

A VERY few days after Downing's death, as Maria was ſitting in a melancholy mood, her father and uncle having gone to take a walk, and her mother being employed in her own apartment, Mr. Gordon was announced; who, after a polite bow and excuſe for his intruſion, ſaid he had ſome letters to deliver to her uncle, one in particular from Captain Forteſcue, who had made him promiſe to give it into his own hands, upon which errand he was come to Weſton.

"From Captain Forteſcue did you ſay, Sir?" eagerly aſked Maria.

"The very gentleman, Ma'am; and as he has requeſted me to enter into a few

details he had not time to commit to paper, I am come to perform my promiſe. Where pray can I ſee Captain Bloomfield?"

Without anſwering his queſtion, and with much more anxiety than ſhe was aware of, ſhe ſaid—

"Pray where did you ſee Captain Forteſcue, Sir, and how does he do? Will you favour me with a ſight of the letter entruſted to your care? I ſhall know the hand-writing if it is from the gentleman I mean."

"Oh, then there are more Captain Forteſcues than the one I have the honour of knowing?"

The kind of penetrating ſhrewdneſs of look Mr. Gordon could not conceal, brought Maria to her recollection: in fact ſhe had never been ſo much off her guard. She appeared confuſed, though the good Mr. Gordon affected not to perceive it; yet it was very evident, from this little ſpecimen, that ſhe was deeply intereſted in every thing which concerned our hero.

"There are the two letters, young lady, I promiſed to deliver to your uncle; for I preſume

preſume I am addreſſing Miſs Bloomfield: the one is from Captain Forteſcue, of the Prince of Wales; the other from his uncle, Governor Warrington. The former I left in good health off Cape Finiſterre about nine days ago."—Then raiſing his eyes as he put them into her hand, with a good-natured ſmile, he ſaid—"Perhaps you were alſo in expectation of a letter from one or other of thoſe gentlemen?"

"No, really, Sir," ſhe replied, with increaſed confuſion; "though I am greatly intereſted in the welfare of my uncle's beſt friend. But you mentioned Captain Forteſcue's uncle; I did not know——"

Maria pauſed.

"I underſtand you, Ma'am," ſaid Mr. Gordon:—"Captain Forteſcue very unexpectedly met with his uncle at ſea, on board a ſhip he had the good fortune to retake. I ſuppoſe you know Governor Warrington is the Captain's uncle, and was upon his paſſage to England?"

"I merely knew, Sir, he had an uncle," ſhe replied; thinking it very ſtrange altogether, but was afraid to put any more queſtions.

"You ſeem to know the hand-writing?"

"Oh yes, Sir, perfectly; I am very glad he has been ſo fortunate. His uncle was a priſoner then?"

"Yes, he was; but it would not amuſe you, I am ſure, were I to attempt to deſcribe a ſea-fight, nor indeed could I do juſtice to the hero whoſe praiſes I wiſh to ſing;—he requires a Homer to recite his actions; I think I never ſaw ſo fine a young man, and ſo truly fit for the diſtinguiſhed rank he has acquired. What is your opinion of Captain Forteſcue, Ma'am? Ladies are allowed to be the beſt judges".

"Really, Sir, I hardly know; I do not pretend to be a judge; to be ſure, I have ſeen Captain Forteſcue very lately, and I believe he is in general reckoned a fine figure by his own ſex."

"I am

"I am convinced he is, Ma'am; but, as I hinted before, you ladies are the beſt judges. Oh! had you ſeen the youthful hero dealing death and deſtruction all around him! HOME, I can conceive, expreſſed his ſentiments, when he made Douglas exclaim—

"Hear, and record my ſoul's unalter'd wiſh!
"Dead or alive, let me but be renown'd!
"May Heav'n inſpire ſome fierce gigantic Frank
"To give a bold defiance to our hoſt!
"Before he ſpeaks it out, I will accept,
"And, like a hero, conquer; or like a hero, die!"

But I am afraid I tire you, Ma'am; the glorious achievements I witneſſed have rendered me ſuch an enthuſiaſt in the cauſe of my friend's nephew. To thoſe leſs intereſted in his deſtiny, my diſcourſe muſt appear tedious; but when can I ſee your uncle? His heart will beat in uniſon with mine, when I recount exploits which would have increaſed the fame of the oldeſt veteran."

"What

"What a provoking old man!" thought Maria. "Why does not he come to the point?" However, having pretty well got over her firſt emotion, forcing a ſmile, ſhe ſaid ſhe would ſend a ſervant for her uncle—he was probably paying ſome viſits in the village; at all events, ſhe hoped he would not think of leaving Weſton till he had ſeen him;—he would certainly be home to dinner, and any friend of Captain Forteſcue's muſt be a welcome gueſt to both him and her father. A ſervant was inſtantly diſpatched in ſearch of them.

"Why, I flatter myſelf I am the herald of ſuch joyful tidings, young lady, I even anticipate the kind reception I am ſure your uncle will give me."

Maria's curioſity had never been wound up to a much greater pitch; yet ſhe forbore to put queſtions to a man ſhe was convinced had gueſſed her ſecret. She reſumed her work, and took a few ſtitches; then was obliged to pull them out again:—how provoking! for ſhe perceived the old man

ſmile.

ſmile. But fortunately, in a few minutes, ſhe was relieved by the arrival of her worthy uncle, who having met with the ſervant, and being told a gentleman from Captain Forteſcue waited at home to ſee him, he haſtened as much as poſſible.

"How is my noble boy, Sir?" were his firſt words, as he ran into the room; "no evil has befallen him, I hope?"

"Far from it, Captain; he has only taken a Spaniſh ſeventy-four, and her prize, an Engliſh Eaſt-Indiaman, which he has ſent home. I came paſſenger in the latter, and have two letters I promiſed to deliver into your own hands."

"My dear Sir!" exclaimed the Captain, catching Mr. Gordon by the hand; "Oh my brave, my noble boy! This is indeed his hand-writing; excuſe me a moment!" breaking the ſeal of Edward's letter. His countenance grew ſo animated while he read the contents, that Maria, in a voice ſcarcely audible, ventured to hope they were of a pleaſing nature. The partiality of the lovely

girl

girl for his beloved friend, was no ſecret to her amiable uncle; he inſtantly put the letter into her hand, ſaying, "There, my dear Maria, judge for yourſelf; you will rejoice, I am ſure, as much as I do, that our Edward is already reſtored to an uncle, and ſoon will be to the reſt of his family. What would not I have given to have witneſſed their meeting! He refers me to you for particulars, Mr. Gordon.—I have heard of his father, Captain Warrington, but never was in his company. This is from his uncle, I preſume?" breaking the other ſeal. "The Governor is a noble fellow!" he exclaimed; "my boy is the counterpart of him. He may inherit his bravery and ſpirit from his father, but his diſpoſition bears more reſemblance to his uncle. But have you taken any thing, Mr. Gordon? You muſt dine here."

Refreſhments were immediately ordered; and the Sheriff and Mrs. Bloomfield having joined the party, Mr. Gordon entered into a circumſtantial detail, firſt of the capture, and

and then of their releaſe, giving the heads of the Governor's ſtory; merely omitting the Caſtle Cary title and eſtates having devolved to the young ſailor.

His recital beguiled Maria of many tears, and more than once moiſtened the eyes of her father and uncle.

Mr. Gordon concluded by ſaying he ſhould the next day make enquiries at the Admiralty reſpecting Captain Warrington; when the anſwers he ſhould receive would determine him whether or not to proceed to Aſhdale.

"There, brother!" exclaimed the Captain; "did not I always tell you my boy was of noble extraction? Why, man, he is lineally deſcended from two Peers; I rather ſuppoſe he would have endeavoured to reach India, if we had not ſo fortunately met. Well, Captain Warrington may be proud of his ſon——"

He was ſtill ſpeaking, when William gallopped up to the door. He had heard of his friend's freſh victories upon Change, and had rode as hard as he could down to Weſton,

to

to impart the tidings to his uncle and family, who were all flattered by his zeal, as much as he was by his friend's kind letter.

Mr. Gordon was obliged to recapitulate the heads of his ſtory once more; and it was agreed that no notice ſhould be taken of their young friend's being the ſon of Captain Warrington, till he returned, and choſe to aſſume the name; as it would only ſet idle people talking, and might be diſagreeable to both father and ſon. Mr. Gordon obſerved they had ſaved him the trouble of giving them a caution to that effect, as the young hero wiſhed to remain Captain Forteſcue till he had made his peace with his father, who being alone blameable, would undoubtedly be very eager to extend the olive branch, as Edward was become his only ſon, and would, at all events, inherit his uncle's immenſe property; warmly deſcanting upon the Governor's merits, who, he obſerved, would never again loſe ſight of his darling Francis.

Mr.

Mr. Gordon was not ſuffered to return to town that evening, which was ſpent as jovially at Weſton as the one on board the Prince, which ſucceeded the emancipation of the captives; and even the next morning they parted with regret, as Mr. Gordon was going into Scotland, and they ſhould probably not meet again in haſte.

As ſoon as he was gone, William having accompanied him to London, the two brothers took a ſtroll round the village, to talk over the events of the preceding day; when the Sheriff obſerved that young Warrington would now be an excellent match for any woman, even of rank.

"True, brother; and if you had not been ſo very fond of money, and ſo afraid of lowering your conſequence, you might have ſecured him for your daughter; but you, forſooth, preferred the foppiſh puppy Downing. Once the offer might have come from you; your choice would have been applauded; it would have appeared a kind of condeſcenſion on your part, and have

have done you honour: now the offer, if an offer there ever ſhould be, muſt proceed from him. He is very willing, I know, to overlook the frailties of human nature; and I am much deceived in him, if his preſent proſpects render him either proud or ambitious. He loves Maria, you muſt have perceived, or have been blind indeed, and ſhe returns his affection; and I dare ſay he will aſk her in matrimony when he can convince you his alliance will do you honour. I am very ſorry you did not ſhew yourſelf as diſintereſted as I am ſure he will; for he poſſeſſes a moſt noble independent ſpirit, and knows when to reſent an inſult, and how to eſtimate a favour, which is more than many men do."

"Well, well, brother, had I known——"

"Aye, that is the very thing; had you known he was of a family as much ſuperior to our's, as our's is to Strafford's, the cooper, and that he was preſumptive heir to fifteen thouſand a year, you would have given him the preference before Downing: ſuch a preference

preference would have been very flattering. I have long wiſhed to ſpeak to you upon this ſubject, and have now done with my reproaches; therefore as riches, I truſt, will neither corrupt nor contaminate his mind, I hope I may yet call him nephew; love and gratitude have e'er done wonders."

The Sheriff was exceedingly mortified; he acknowledged the juſtneſs of the accuſation; he believed Maria's heart was ſet upon Edward, but declared he never ſhould have forced her inclinations; and could only join in his brother's hopes that all would yet end well.

They ſeparated good friends, and the Captain wrote a long letter of congratulation to his dear boy; not forgetting to inform him that the courageous Downing had, at Maria's particular requeſt, been diſmiſſed; and the following day, either in a fit of deſpair or frenzy, had accepted a challenge from Medmore, which had terminated his career of folly. This letter he carried to town the following morning, being very anxious

anxious to convince Edward he had no longer any rival to dread. We will, therefore, once more return to our hero, whom we left failing up the Streights with a very favourable breeze.

CHAP. XII.

DURING their voyage both uncle and nephew had been very communicative to each other, and seldom apart for half an hour at a time. The latter's greatest ideas of future happiness centered in an union with Maria; and this the former was resolved to bring about, if within the bounds of human probability.

Had he been as well acquainted with the state of Edward's heart when he decided to accompany

accompany him up the Streights, he had his doubts whether he ſhould not, to enſure his happineſs, have continued his voyage to England, where he was very impatient to return when he found there was ſo powerful a rival to fear; but there was no retreating, and he kept his thoughts to himſelf.

They had nearly reached the confines of Egypt, before they ſaw or heard any thing of the Britiſh fleet; when, having taken a French corvette, they learned from the Captain that the two fleets were in ſight of each other, and not more than ſix hours' ſail from them.

This intelligence greatly increaſed our hero's impatience, knowing he had many ſtores on board which would be of eſſential ſervice to the Britiſh at this juncture. He therefore crowded all the ſail he dared, as it blew a very ſtrong breeze; and in a few hours had the ſatisfaction to perceive he had not been deceived, as that very evening he came up with the fleet, and immediately went on board the Commander in Chief's

Chief's ſhip, to preſent ſuch papers as he was charged with. His arrival, which happened ſo very *a-propos*, occaſioned a general joy; and the boats were briſkly employed all night in receiving and diſtributing the various ſupplies he had brought for their uſe, as, at the dawn of day, the Admiral's flag announced his intentions of bringing the enemy to action. Every Commander knew his ſtation except Forteſcue, who ſoon received his orders, which were, as his ſhip had been conſiderably lightened, and drew leſs water than any other fit for ſuch an undertaking, to drop before a battery, which, it was feared, would greatly annoy the Britiſh, and endeavour, by diſmounting, to ſilence the guns. He was informed, at the ſame time, that the Commander in Chief was perfectly aware of the danger of the undertaking, as the wind ſtood; yet, as it muſt be attempted for the general benefit, he knew no one ſo likely to ſucceed as Captain Forteſcue, being no ſtranger either to his ſkill or bravery.

This

This polite meſſage ſavoured rather too much of flattery for the young Commander; he knew it was a neceſſary undertaking, and he did not want to be flattered into doing his duty, though he undertook it with a ſort of ſecret dread he would very unwillingly have acknowledged. He therefore determined to ſucceed, if poſſible; and as ſoon as the ſignal for that purpoſe was given, he ran in as near ſhore as he conſidered it prudent to venture, under a very heavy fire from the battery in queſtion, which was returned with intereſt, till both fleets were engaged, when, by degrees, the battery ſlackened her fire, having ſeveral of the guns diſmounted, or otherwiſe damaged.—Forteſcue therefore began to hope he ſhould ſucceed to the extent of his wiſhes, though he had already rendered the fleet a very conſiderable ſervice, when unfortunately a ſudden guſt of wind drove the frigate on ſhore, directly under the battery, and laid her in ſuch a poſition that but very few of her guns could be brought to bear.

This unhoped-for accident induced the enemy to redouble their efforts to totally diſmantle her, while every exertion, on the part of the crew, was made, though in vain, as the wind freſhened, to get her off; and as ſhe continued to receive conſiderable damage from the battery, it being no longer in her Officers' power to defend her, Edward ſent to the Commander in Chief, to requeſt leave to quit her for the preſent, and to diſtribute his crew among the fleet, in hopes ſhe might be both ſaved and got once more afloat when the engagement was over.

The Admiral approved of the notion, and returned for anſwer, he requeſted Captain Forteſcue would diſpoſe of his Officers and men as he thought moſt likely to be conducive to the general advantage, and to come on board his own ſhip himſelf; for he was anxious to thank him for the important ſervice he had already done his country. But before Forteſcue's Lieutenant, who had been his ambaſſador, had quitted the Admiral's ſhip, word was brought that Admiral Sir

Sir William Montgomery was dangerouſly wounded; and as the ſhip he commanded lay the moſt expoſed, the Admiral, upon ſecond thoughts, requeſted Captain Forteſcue would go himſelf, with a proper proportion of his men, on board her, as it was where he thought his ſervices would be moſt required.

The young Captain cheerfully complied, after exhorting his men to do their duty, under the command of whomever they might fall for the time being, as he hoped ſoon to unite them again; and the boats being ready, they were ſoon diſperſed. Himſelf and his uncle, who had never quitted his ſide, and who inſiſted upon accompanying him with fifty of his choſen men, prepared to go on board the ———, where they were moſt joyfully received, as that ſhip had loſt a conſiderable number of men. The young hero immediately walked up to the Commanding Officer, and in a few words repeated why he had quitted his own ſhip, and that he was come on board the ———

in compliance with the orders he had received from the Commander in Chief, who feared their loſs had been great.

"Indeed it has been great," replied the brave old veteran, for ſuch he really was.—"Give me your hand, my brave fellow; we are all acquainted with your heroic deeds, and know what you are capable of undertaking. You ſhall——"

At that moment, and before the two hands were ſeparated, the old Captain was laid at the young one's feet; and though ſo much accuſtomed of late to theſe ſcenes of horror, the young hero remained motionleſs for ſeveral ſeconds. The continued roaring of the cannon rouſed him at laſt to a ſenſe of his own ſituation, and he perceived his uncle ſtanding at his elbow.

"Such is the fortune of war, my dear Edward," cried the good old man.—"How many men could have been better ſpared! But there is no diſputing the will of Heaven."

"Certainly not, my dear Sir; we muſt only try to revenge the death of, no doubt, both

both an able and experienced Officer. I only wiſh you would retire from this ſcene of ſmoke, uproar, and ſlaughter."

"I cannot leave you, Edward, and I am reſolved to ſhare your fate."

The firſt Lieutenant now came forward; he had learned the melancholy news, and requeſted Captain Forteſcue would aſſume the command.

Edward was rather averſe to the meaſure; but all the Officers, and even the crew, ſeconded the Lieutenant, who ſaid "he could not think of taking upon himſelf the command, while a Captain, ſent by the Admiral, was on board. The crew beſides thought him invincible, and prejudice went a great way ſometimes among ſailors."

"Is the Admiral on board really dead?" aſked Edward.

Not abſolutely, he was informed, but no hopes were entertained of his recovery; nor was he capable of iſſuing any orders.—The young hero therefore inſtantly accepted the command, and, by a ſhort ſpeech, ani-

mated his men to revenge the death of two ſuch brave Officers as they had loſt in the conteſt, ſince the Admiral was certainly dying. Inſpired by his preſence, and cheered by his unremitting exertions, the battle was maintained for ſeveral hours with the moſt determined bravery. The ——— had been very roughly handled; nor had ſhe been more ſparing of her more powerful adverſary, whoſe fire at laſt began to ſlacken, and ſoon after her main-maſt went by the board. Unable, therefore, any longer to defend herſelf, ſhe, though much ſuperior in point of guns and metal, ſtruck her colours; and Edward was not a little elated, upon looking round him, to perceive ſhe was the firſt to pay that compliment to the Britiſh flag.

"Bravely done, my dear Edward!" cried his overjoyed uncle, who ſtill maintained his poſt.—"Say what you will, it is a great thing to be fortunate; and I cannot help thinking but you are one of her moſt favourite children," flinging his arms round his

his dear nephew, with tears of joy trickling down his cheeks; and fell upon his knees the moment he ſlackened his embrace, to return thanks where moſt due for this freſh proof of mercy.

The ſhip's crew, though all ſpent with fatigue, made the air reſound with their ſhouts of victory. The Lieutenant, who had ſo modeſtly reſigned his claim, was the next to wiſh him joy, and to remind him how well he had verified his predictions.

Edward replied, he had only been ſent on board to ſhare the glory which would undoubtedly all have fallen to his ſhare, if he had ſtaid in his own ſhip.

"I tell you, Captain Forteſcue, I could not, with the beſt intentions in the world, have ſucceeded as you have done. The crew began to tire before you took the command; and theſe brave fellows, who have been ſo accuſtomed to victory under your auſpices, put freſh life into thoſe who began to ſink. They never entertained a doubt of ſucceſs while you commanded; ſo

now for a glaſs of grog. What ſay you?—I am all but choked. This gentleman, I underſtand, is a relation of your's, who volunteers his ſervices. I begin to fancy you have ſome ſecret, to make yourſelf thus univerſally beloved; but come along into the cabin for a few minutes, and then we will ſee what more can be done."

"Why our prize is very ſafe, ſeemingly," replied Edward.—"I believe we may take poſſeſſion of her at our leiſure; and the poor fellows, I dare ſay, would be equally glad of a little refreſhment."

"True," replied the Lieutenant; "and they ſhall be indulged. I don't perceive, Captain Forteſcue, you have met with the leaſt wound, though no perſon on board has been more expoſed."

His uncle replied—"My nephew, my dear Sir, is a particular favourite of the god of war."

"He ought at leaſt to be conſidered as the favourite ſon of Britain," ſaid another Officer,

Officer, ſtanding by; "for he certainly turned our fortune."

Several by-ſtanders laughed at what they called his ſuperſtition; and having haſtily taken ſome refreſhment, they all, except the Governor, who was perſuaded, now all the danger was over, as he was very much fatigued, to endeavour to get a little reſt, returned upon deck, where they had the ſatisfaction to perceive the Britiſh had now conſiderably the advantage, as more of the enemy's ſhips had ſtruck, and at laſt the victory became complete; but notwithſtanding the freſh triumph he had obtained, Edward could not help caſting many a wiſhful look at his own ſhip, which ſtill remained in the ſame ſtate he had left her, having received no farther damage, as the men who worked the battery guns had thought it uſeleſs to expend any more ammunition upon her, after ſhe was abandoned by her crew. Having given all the aſſiſtance in his power to the neareſt Britiſh ſhips, taken poſſeſſion of the ——, and done every

thing that appeared neceſſary for the preſent, as he was really ſinking under the unremitting fatigue he had undergone for the laſt two days and nights, Edward was very happy to reſign his command, and to ſeek that repoſe which he began to ſtand ſo much in need of.

The evening having cloſed in, and every thing tolerably quiet around them, the young hero accompanied the Lieutenant, already his faſt friend, once more into the cabin, where they had left the Governor, who awoke upon their entrance, and acknowledged he had never been ſo completely worn down; but at the Officer's requeſt, agreed to ſup with them before they all tried to get a little reſt by turns. While ſupper was preparing, the firſt Lieutenant went to viſit the Admiral, who had not ſpoke, he had been informed, for ſeveral hours, though he appeared to be in great pain, but ſo weak, through loſs of blood, that he was ſcarcely able to raiſe his voice.—The ſurgeon and his mates had been too

buſy

buſy to remain any of them conſtantly by his ſide; but two of his ſervants were ſtanding near his bed, with orders to call one of them, ſhould Sir William require it, and the firſt ſurgeon had returned to him the moment he could leave the cockpit; but finding him in the ſame ſituation, was retiring when the Lieutenant entered, who aſked him how he found Sir William.—He ſhook his head, ſaying, in a whiſper—

"In a very few hours, poſſibly minutes, all will be over with him; Nature ſeems making her laſt effort."

"Have you told him we are victorious?"

"I have hinted as much; but he ſcarcely ſeemed to comprehend me."

The Lieutenant drew near, and tenderly enquired how the Admiral found himſelf; when he perceived he underſtood him, and ſeemed anxious to know the fate of the day, the Lieutenant gave him a brief account of every thing that had occurred from the moment he had been wounded.

The aſtoniſhing victory the Britiſh had obtained ſeemed to act as a cordial upon the wounded Admiral's ſpirits, who obſerved he could not lament Captain Mildmay, as he had been ſpared a great deal of pain: he only wiſhed it would pleaſe the Almighty to take him out of his miſery.—"Though I ought not to murmur," he proceeded; "the Captain was a very good man, and I hope we ſhall ſoon meet in a better world. But methinks it would give me a momentary ſatisfaction to ſee the young hero you mention, who has been of ſuch ſingular ſervice on this glorious day, and that worthy old relation of his who refuſed to quit him. How pleaſing is ſuch tried friendſhip! There is ſomething equally heroic and brave in both; they muſt ſpring from a race of heroes. Do, my dear friend, let me have the ſatisfaction of ſeeing them; it will afford me ſome conſolation, and may, for a moment, make me forget my pain."

"Then I am ſure they will be amply repaid,

repaid, Sir William," replied the Lieutenant, as he haſtened to prefer the requeſt.

The company were waiting his return to go to ſupper. He repeated the Admiral's requeſt, with which they did not heſitate a moment to comply, and were only ſorry to hear his diſſolution was ſo faſt approaching. The Lieutenant preceded them in; and not knowing the old gentleman's name, merely ſaid—"Captain Forteſcue and his uncle, Sir William."—Edward advanced firſt. The Admiral looked at him very anxiouſly; then extending his feeble hand—

"Your guardian angel, it ſhould ſeem, never forſakes you, young gentleman.—Your former gallant exploits are not unknown to me, and I give you joy moſt ſincerely upon this laſt ſucceſs. I can only regret we were not ſooner acquainted; for I glory in hearing of ſuch rare qualities in ſo young a man."

The afflicted, though animated young Captain had taken the proffered hand, which

which he preſſed gently, while his looks ſaid more than words could have done.

"Be ſeated," ſaid the Admiral, "for a few minutes. I perceive you are already too much fatigued. I hope I ſhall ſoon be releaſed. Excuſe my having ſent for you here to afflict you; it is only what we ſailors ought to look upon as part of our trade.—That gentleman is your uncle, I underſtand, who volunteers his ſervices, that he may have an opportunity of being an eye witneſs to your heroic exploits?—Give me your hand, Sir; I am unacquainted with your name; but I rejoice in ſeeing round me none but brave and good men. The day is our own, and I ſhall die happy!"—He ſighed, and made a pauſe.—"Happy did I ſay?—Well, God's will be done!"—A tear ſtarted in his eye.—"Your attachment, Sir, to that youth does honour to you both."

"Your approbation of our conduct, Sir William, is truly flattering. My name is Edward Warrington."

The

The Admiral gave a ſtart at that inſtant, but held the Governor's hand ſo faſt, that he was very near pulling him upon the bed.—His eyes rolled and looked wild; he trembled violently, and held the good old man ſo tight, that it was as much as to ſay, "ſave me!" and they all ſeemed to think this excruciating torture was the forerunner of his diſſolution: but by degrees he came more to himſelf, when he gazed in ſilence by turns upon both uncle and nephew. The Lieutenant, looking at one of the ſervants in waiting, ſaid, "Step for the ſurgeon;" but before he could leave the cabin, the Admiral exclaimed, "No;" and the effort he made ſeemed to have exhauſted all his remaining ſtrength. He let go the Governor's hand, and gaſped for breath; but after a few minutes, he gradually recovered, and faintly aſked for ſomething to drink. Having moiſtened his lips, he ſaid, looking at the Governor—

"I once knew a gentleman of your name, Sir. You have no recollection of my perſon?"

"No,

"No, really, Sir William, not the ſlighteſt indeed; I have ſpent the greateſt part of my life in the Eaſt Indies."

"Your complexion led me to ſuppoſe ſo, Sir," replied the Admiral, the tears chaſing each other rapidly down his cheeks, while he gazed by turns upon the two ſtrangers, who were by no means unmoved ſpectators of his anguiſh. At laſt, making a conſiderable effort, "Pray, Mr. Warrington, had you not, or more properly have you not, a brother in the ſervice?"

"I truſt I have, Sir William; very likely you are acquainted with him. I was upon my voyage to England to ſee him, when chance, or, more properly ſpeaking, my nephew's bravery, conducted me on board his ſhip; and ſome peculiar circumſtances induced me to accompany him into the Mediterranean. You can probably inform me where my brother now is; for I have not been able to learn whether he is ſtill in employ; I merely know he was ſome time ſince."

The

The Admiral groaned aloud.

" I am fearful that talking increaſes your pain, Sir William?" remarked the humane Governor.

" No, no, my dear Warrington. But that brother of your's—Oh, he has much to anſwer for! I do know him well; and did not he, owing to the moſt baneful paſſion which can take poſſeſſion of a man's mind, baniſh the moſt accompliſhed youth ever father was bleſſed with, from his ſight? Can there be peace in heaven for ſuch a ſinner?"

" I am convinced, Sir William," replied the aſtoniſhed Governor, " admitting my brother has erred, he is a ſincere penitent; and who ſhall venture to ſcrutinize the decrees of Heaven? Perhaps his treatment of his ſon has greatly contributed to the youth's fame; for in the young hero by your ſide, behold the exile from his parental manſion, who, far from thinking his father to blame, only pants for the moment when, at his feet, he may crave his pardon for having ſo long ſuffered him to remain in ignorance of his deſtiny, and, like me, is convinced

vinced that all was for the beſt; for he would have been deprived of the opportunities he has had of riſing by his merit alone."

"Oh merciful Heaven!" exclaimed the tortured Admiral, his anguiſh apparently increaſing, "ſpare me, Oh ſpare me for a few moments! Is it poſſible I behold in that brave youth your brother's much and long regretted ſon? Where has he been ſince, in obedience to the harſh decree of his ſevere father, he left his home?—Not with you in India, Sir; you would not ſurely have kept ſo near a relation ſo long in ſuſpenſe reſpecting his deſtiny, though his conduct might have warranted ſuch treatment?"

"No, upon my honour, Sir William; we have never ſeen each other till he reſcued me from the hands of the Spaniards. I muſt indeed have been devoid of feeling, had I acted ſuch a part by the father of a child whom I had not loved. No, I have participated moſt ſincerely in my brother's ſorrows:—but I find, Sir William, you are well acquainted with this dear brother; I will therefore enter

into

into a few details reſpecting this young runaway."—His uncle then briefly related their meeting, and thus proceeded.—"He had the good fortune, about eight years ago, by mere chance, to intereſt Captain John Bloomfield in his favour, with whom he went round the world in the Ocean, and to whom he is indebted for his profeſſional ſkill, for he has really and truly riſen by his own merit;—wiſhing to remain unknown to his family, he has borne the name of Forteſcue from the moment he left Aſhdale."

"May that Being, who alone can reward the worthy Bloomfield, ſhower down his choiceſt bleſſings on his head! How much does his conduct towards the deſerted youth increaſe the father's guilt! But I perceive you are ignorant, Sir, of what has very lately, that is within the laſt twelve months, befallen your wretched brother."

"I certainly am, Sir William; for the laſt letter I received from him is of a prior date."

"His

"His eldeſt ſon," the Admiral rejoined, "has, I preſume, purſued his voyage to England, where his preſence has been long expected. Did his ſecond reach Calcutta before you left it?"

"He did, Sir William: but pray proceed to give me the promiſed information reſpecting my brother," ſighing deeply as he concluded.

"You begin to gueſs what I have to relate, I perceive; do you not?"

"No, really; I am very much at a loſs, Sir William, and very impatient."

"I long to gratify you in all you wiſh to know," ſaid the Admiral; "but I believe my wound bleeds afreſh; I grow very faint, yet I would fain be ſpared a few minutes longer, excruciating as are the pangs I feel.—What was it I meant to ſay? Oh, I recollect. Captain Warrington had the good fortune to ſignalize himſelf laſt autumn in his profeſſional line; and on his return to England, after that event, he found a relation of his mother's, from whom he never had the

lighteſt expectations, had left him a very large eſtate, upon condition he aſſumed the name and arms of the deceaſed. For ſuch a bribe he readily complied; and our gracious Monarch, in conſideration of his late ſervices, made him a Knight of the Bath."

At this moment the ſurgeon, who had been again ſummoned, arrived; he put by the bed-cloaths to examine his patient, who had had infinite difficulty in giving utterance to his words for the laſt few ſeconds, and was now endeavouring to regain breath enough to renew his tale. The practitioner ſhook his head, but ſaid he muſt endeavour to ſtop the bleeding, though he was very loath to looſen the bandages. Meanwhile the agitated Edward and his uncle ſtood looking in wonder and amazement, firſt at the Admiral, then at each other; and might be ſuppoſed to converſe with their eyes, which were fixed upon each other, when Sir William put aſide the ſurgeon's hand, telling him, as well as he was able, to aſſiſt him to riſe; which being done, he looked

ſtedfaſtly

ſtedfaſtly upon the two afflicted ſtrangers, and juſt whiſpered, "My time is come!" making an effort while he ſpoke to extend his hand.—"Can you, my beloved Francis, forgive your unknown but truly repentant father, who will reſign his breath without a murmur, ſince, in his laſt moments, he is permitted to call down a bleſſing upon his darling boy?"

"Oh merciful Heavens, what do I hear!—My father, my father!" cried Edward, as he caught his expiring parent in his arms, who vainly endeavoured to bleſs him once more, as he ſunk back upon his pillow, breathing his laſt ſigh in the arms of his only ſurviving ſon.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

WE ſhall not attempt to deſcribe the heartfelt grief of the young hero; nor was he the only, though the greateſt mourner on board the ——, as Sir William was generally beloved, and as generally lamented; yet all the Officers and crew rejoiced when told he had died in the arms of ſuch a ſon. Hardened as they may appear, all adored the wondrous ways of Providence, who had thus accidentally brought them together; while the worthy Governor endeavoured to cheer the drooping ſpirits of his nephew, by obſerving his father had died glorioufly, fighting for his King and country;

and

and how much he ought to be thankful he had been permitted to receive not only his laſt bleſſing, but his laſt ſigh;—beſides, ought not he to rejoice he was ſpared the ſorrow he muſt have felt for the premature fate of his elder ſons? Upon the whole, his laſt moments had been comparatively happy, and it would be impious to arraign the decrees of Heaven.

Edward agreed in the juſtice of his uncle's remarks, and preſumed his ſiſter was at Aſhdale. His father had not mentioned her, though her happineſs ſhould, nevertheleſs, be his firſt care.

"A generous thought, my dear Edward; your conjecture is moſt likely a juſt one; at all events, we ſhall not have much difficulty in finding the daughter of Sir William Montgomery;—ſo now let me requeſt you will endeavour to take a little repoſe, as I mean to do, and forget for a time our joint loſs."

Edward complied with his uncle's wiſhes; and the exceſſive fatigue he had undergone acting

acting as an opiate, he enjoyed a few hours' ſleep, and joined the Officers belonging to the ——, if not in ſpirits, far more compoſed than he had been the preceding evening. The Firſt Lieutenant wiſhed him very much to have retained the command of the ſhip, alledging ſhe would doubtleſs ſoon be beſtowed upon him in return for his own; but the young Peer, for he no longer objected to aſſuming his title, abſolutely refuſed to give any orders, though very willing to receive them, or aſſiſt with his advice.

While they were debating, a ſignal was diſplayed for the Captain of the —— to come on board the Commander in Chief's ſhip. Edward, as we ſhall ſtill continue to call him, immediately ſaid, "If I am to command, I muſt inſiſt upon your obeying that ſignal."

"A good thought, nephew," cried the Governor; "I will, with his permiſſion, accompany that gentleman."

"I will not have it ſaid I diſobey orders," ſaid the Lieutenant, "and ſhall be happy to have you, Sir, for a companion."

"Then pray, my dear uncle, requeſt the Admiral will give orders to have an attempt, at all events, made to get my ſhip afloat again; I really think it practicable now."

"I will," he replied.

Governor Warrington was received by the brave Admiral with the greateſt politeneſs, for which he was ever renowned; and having paid the juſt tribute of applauſe to the valour and ſkill of both father and ſon, and condoled with the Governor upon the death of the former, he ſaid, as he preſumed Lord Caſtle Cary muſt have buſineſs of importance to ſettle in England, he would, if his ſhip could be got afloat, and had not received too much damage, ſend him with a ſecond account of the victory to his ſuperior Officer, now at Liſbon, who would doubtleſs ſend his Lordſhip on to England, leſt the ——, which had already failed upon the ſame errand, ſhould not reach

reach the place of her deſtination; and, at all events, ſhould the Prince of Wales be rendered unfit for ſervice, he could ſend both his Lordſhip and the Governor home in the —— cutter, which he meant in that caſe to diſpatch with his duplicate letters. "As for Sir William Montgomery," he proceeded, "if I might adviſe, he ought to be buried with all due honours upon this coaſt. Sailors have prejudices, and muſt ſometimes be humoured; we very lately had a man of war loſt, which misfortune was ſolely attributed to her having a corpſe on board."

"I perfectly underſtand you, Sir; where the tree falls, there it ſhall lay; as I am convinced it will be all the ſame at the day of judgment, whether we riſe out of the monument of our anceſtors, or out of a ſimple but honourable grave. I will, therefore, return to my nephew, and inform him of your kind intentions; and he will, when rather more recovered from the recent ſhock

he has ſuſtained, return you his thanks in perſon."

Edward was fully ſenſible of the Admiral's kind intentions, and inſtantly began collecting his men, who had been very fortunate upon the whole; and being aſſiſted by great part of the crew of the ———, ſucceeded in the attempt to right the Prince of Wales, which was a moſt fortunate thing for old England, ſome of the ſailors obſerved. She had not received ſo much damage as had been expected; and every exertion was made to put her in a fit condition for her intended voyage.

Lord Caſtle Cary went to make his report to the Admiral, who was laviſh in his encomiums upon his ſkill. His rare talents did honour to the brave Captain Bloomfield; courage, he obſerved, was inherent in his family, and it might be juſtly ſaid that Sir William Montgomery had tranſmitted both his ſpirit and his fame to his ſon. On the ſecond day that Officer was interred on ſhore with the greateſt honours; and on the third,

third, having received both his diſpatches and inſtructions, Edward ſet ſail for Liſbon, where they arrived in perfect ſafety; and the firſt veſſel which had been diſpatched with the news of the victory having been very unfortunate, his Lordſhip was almoſt immediately ordered to purſue his voyage to England, with additional diſpatches for the Lords Commiſſioners of the Admiralty. They were within a few leagues of the Scilly Iſlands, when a violent gale ſprung up, and drove the ſhip ſo far out of her courſe, that it was found neceſſary, for the ſake of diſpatch, as the wind ſet, to run up the Briſtol Channel; and as there was plenty of pilots upon the look-out, having taken one on board, the deſign was put into execution, and they came to an anchor in King's Road. As it was not cuſtomary for King's ſhips of ſo large a burden to enter the narrow channel leading to that ancient city, and being informed by the pilot that a white houſe, which they had in ſight, was an inn, where paſſengers from on board the

Weſt Indiamen, and Iriſh traders, generally landed, and as it was eight miles to Briſtol by water, the Captain ſoon decided to do the ſame; therefore he ſtepped into his own boat with his uncle and two ſervants, and was rowed away from the ſhip, followed by the beſt wiſhes of his Officers and crew for his ſpeedy and ſafe return amongſt them, as is generally the caſe. The ſtorm had been ſucceeded by a moſt delightful calm; the day was remarkably fine; and as it was nearly high water, and a ſpring tide, every ſurrounding object appeared to very great advantage, when, within half a mile of the inn, the tide flowed to the very margin of a moſt delightful green walk, which, being ſometimes laid under water, the turf had the appearance of velvet, and was as level as a bowling-green, with very few interruptions for more than a mile.

The uncle and nephew were delighted with the proſpect before them.

"How I long," ſaid the former, "to ſet my foot upon my native ſhore!" as they were gliding along near the border.

"Pull

"Pull up, my lads," cried Edward; "we can ſtep on ſhore, I perceive, with eaſe."

They did ſo, and in a minute the Governor's wiſh was gratified.

"Heavens be praiſed!" he exclaimed, as he quitted the boat, and looked round him; "I never ſaw a more charming ſpot than this is at this ſeaſon; 'tis abſolutely, what it appeared to be, like treading upon velvet. Thoſe fertile fields on either ſide, and that hanging wood and ſtupendous rock at a diſtance, render the proſpect truly enchanting."

Many people, who were taking the air upon this pleaſant ſpot, were aſſembled near the general landing-place, anxious to know what news the Naval Officer had brought, whom they had perceived advancing, not doubting, from the rarity of the ſight, that it was ſomething of great importance which had induced him to come in there. In the midſt of their various conjectures, to their infinite diſappointment, the Captain and his uncle landed, as has

been already mentioned, ſending the boat forward with the ſervants and baggage.—The company therefore advanced to meet them. Among the foremoſt were two gentlemen, and a lady who held an arm of each.

"Yonder is a moſt beautiful girl, Edward, advancing to welcome us," ſaid the Governor, gaily.—"How comfortable that looks! I would bet a good wager that is her father and uncle. Well, old England after all!"

During this ſpeech, the young Peer, having ſtepped upon his ſhoe-ſtring, in jumping out of the boat, was upon one knee faſtening it, and the uncle ſtanding two or three paces before him; ſo that, by the time Edward had arranged the tie to his mind, the two gentlemen and lady were within a few yards of them. Our hero had not made any anſwer; but the moment he aſſumed his upright poſture, he eagerly preſſed forward to get a glance of the extolled beauty. He was, for a moment, fixed to the ſpot, when as ſuddenly ſpringing forward, he exclaimed—

"Surely

"Surely my eyes do not deceive me!—It is—Oh yes, it is my dear father!" and met the embrace of one of the gentlemen.

The recollection of the name he had unthinkingly, though naturally pronounced, added to the joy his Lordſhip felt at that moment, brought the tears into his eyes.

"Welcome a thouſand times once more to England, my dear ſon!"

We need not add it was Captain Bloomfield, who having releaſed his young friend from his paternal embrace, the moment he recovered his ſpeech, Edward introduced this beloved benefactor to Governor Warrington, as his only remaining parent, turning on one ſide as he concluded, to pay the juſt tribute to the one he had ſo recently loſt. The ſcarf our hero wore round his arm, caught the eye of Captain Bloomfield, and he inſtantly gueſſed he had loſt his father; but the amiable man's agitation and joy made him attend very little to the friendly greeting he received from Governor Warrington,

for his thoughts were entirely engroſſed about his dear Edward.

"I beg your pardon, Sir," ſaid he at laſt.

"There needs no apology, my moſt worthy friend," replied the Governor.—"What I have witneſſed is only an additional proof of all I have heard in your praiſe. We have a long and melancholy tale to relate, Captain Bloomfield; but we will not damp our mutual pleaſure by reverting to paſt events, which cannot be recalled. My brother, I truſt, is happy; he loſt his life in a glorious cauſe, and reſigned his breath in his ſon's arms!"

This was ſaid in a low voice on one ſide. Edward, having rather recovered himſelf, turned round, and advanced towards Maria; for the beautiful girl, who had ſtruck the Governor ſo forcibly, was indeed Maria, who ſtood within a few paces of the man ſhe adored, trembling, and ſupported by her father.

The Sheriff was not backward in welcoming the young hero. The agitation of the two

two lovers perhaps proceeded from different cauſes. Not having received a line from England ſince he had quitted it, Maria might be loſt to him for ever, his Lordſhip thought; while ſhe, on her part, knowing he was become a much richer man, as well as of family, concluded he would not think of uniting himſelf with a merchant's daughter. Theſe had been her reflections of long ſtanding.

"I hope I have the honour of ſeeing Miſs Bloomfield well?" ſaid the half-breathleſs Edward; but the moment all his fears were removed, he breathed more freely.

"Maria," ſaid her uncle, "why you don't ſpeak, child! You who were ſo anxious a few minutes ago that I ſhould get acquainted with the gentlemen in the boat; or to try to find out, at all events, if they came from Liſbon, that we might be able to hear of Captain Forteſcue!"

Maria raiſed her eyes; ſhe bluſhed deeply, while ſhe attempted a ſuitable reply. Edward's looks thanked her for the intereſt ſhe took in his welfare; ſhe was

ſtill Maria Bloomfield, and that was the greateſt conſolation he could have met with at that moment. Their kind friends, wiſhing to relieve them from this ſtate of embarraſſment, the Governor ſtepped forward, ſaying—

"Let me gratify the firſt wiſh of my heart, which is to introduce you properly to theſe dear and kind friends, my dear nephew—Lord Caſtle Cary, Captain, Mr. and Miſs Bloomfield; and would you believe it, ſo partial was he to the name of Forteſcue, with difficulty could I perſuade him to aſſume a title, devolved to him in right of his mother, by the death of his elder brothers! However, he has already ſignalized that name. I preſume you have heard of our brilliant victory in the Mediterranean?"

"No, really!" replied the Captain.—"How many more agreeable ſurpriſes?"—Upon my honour it is too much for one day."

"Well then, with your leave, my dear friends, I will, for the preſent, defer entering

into details; moments are even precious;—like you, I am too happy to think we have thus unexpectedly met; but our Edward and I muſt travel to London with all poſſible expedition. You, my dear Sir, had better follow us at your leiſure."

"Oh, I will accompany you to town," cried Captain Bloomfield. "But z——ds! man, you muſt take a little refreſhment firſt, while a chaiſe is preparing."

"Oh moſt certainly," ſaid the Sheriff.—"Half an hour cannot make any great difference, my Lord."

"Don't try to tempt me to forget my duty, my dear Mr. Bloomfield; I could not give a greater inſtance of my ſelf-denial than in thus tearing myſelf away from ſuch agreeable ſociety."

At this time he held Maria's hand, which he raiſed to his lips as he ceaſed ſpeaking.—The Governor, highly pleaſed, ſaid—

"I deſire, nephew, you will introduce me more particularly to that young lady, as you have

have taught me to eſteem her many amiable qualities."

Never did Maria feel more gratified, nor never did ſhe appear more amiable, or to greater advantage. The Captain took the firſt opportunity to aſk his Lordſhip, in a whiſper, if he had received his letter, in which he gave him an account of Downing's death, and Medmore's glorious exit. The queſtion really ſurpriſed him, while it baniſhed every fear from his mind. He anſwered in the negative; but it was not a time for entering into particulars. They ſoon reached the town, where, while a few refreſhments were preparing, Governor Warrington briefly recounted their meeting with Sir William Montgomery; and learned, in return, that Maria, having for ſome time been rather unwell, and very much hurt to think ſhe ſhould have been ſuppoſed to have occaſioned a duel between two men, both of whom ſhe had abſolutely rejected, they had thought it expedient to bring her to Clifton, where they had ſpent a month. Theſe curſory

ſory explanations were ſo ſatisfactory, though melancholy in the main, that recent troubles were ſoon forgotten.

Lord Caſtle Cary was very ſorry his duty obliged him to ſeparate ſo ſpeedily from her his ſoul held moſt dear; but the chaiſe being ready, and his faithful ſervant, Sam, mounted, he took a reluctant leave.

The Sheriff hoped his Lordſhip would make either of his houſes his home till he arrived in town, which would be in two or three days at fartheſt.

Maria merely ſaid her brother William would be happy to ſee him.

The Governor decided to accompany the Bloomfield family, who declared their intention of ſetting out the following morning, thinking, by that means, to forward matters for his nephew.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

DURING the journey, Captain Bloomfield entered into every detail reſpecting his niece likely to flatter our hero, who, in return, declared his intention of applying in form to the Sheriff for leave to addreſs her as a lover, acknowledging he had long loved Maria, though he never would have made his paſſion known, if Fortune had not thus ſmiled upon him.

"Why, then to follow your lead, my dear Edward, we ought, in conſcience, to refuſe our conſent; as a merchant's daughter is certainly not a proper match for Lord Caſtle Cary."

"And

"And pray, my dear Sir, where would this Peer have been," aſked Edward, "but for the uncle of this merchant's daughter? I truſt you are too well acquainted with my heart to need any proteſtations. I ſhall ever conſider you as my father, and muſt regret Sir William Montgomery; but had he lived, I ſhould never have loved him more than I have ever done the protector of my youth, and the preſerver of my life."

The Captain was very much affected;—he could only preſs his favourite's hand, whom he accompanied to the Admiralty, where it is needleſs to ſay he met with a reception worthy the glorious news he brought, and that Lord Caſtle Cary was aſſured he might command a firſt rate man of war whenever he choſe; but he preferred his frigate, which he was requeſted to order round to Plymouth, that ſhe might go into dock for a few months, though he was aſſured his men ſhould neither be paid off nor transferred to any other veſſel, as they deſerved

deſerved every indulgence which could be granted them.

Having finiſhed his buſineſs at the Admiralty, they drove into Crutched Friars, where Dame Collins, who had learned, with tranſports bordering on rapture, from Samuel, that her young favourite was a Lord, overwhelmed him with congratulations, but was ſorry her young maſter had but juſt before ſet off for Weſton.

"What, alone, Collins?" ſaid the Captain.

"Yes, yes, Captain, I don't know what there is in the wind, not I. He has got mighty fond of a country life of late. I never ſaw a change ſo much for the better. As I tell him, I like to ſee young folks ſober and ſteady. I do believe a ball at the Manſion-Houſe would hardly detain him a night in London."

"Perhaps there is a lady in the caſe," ſaid Lord Caſtle Cary, laughing.

"Well, well, my Lord, if there be, I know no harm in young folks marrying, if they can but live honeſt afterwards; but I don't

don't know, not I. Mayhap there may be a lady, as my Lord ſays, in the caſe."

"Well then now, Collins," cried the Captain, "get us ſomething for dinner as ſpeedily as poſſible."

"Ah, ſure!" ſhe replied. "I never went about dreſſing a dinner with a better will. I have cooked for Lords before to-day."

As ſoon as they had finiſhed their meal, they ſet out for Weſton, where, ſlowly ſauntering on the green, they perceived William.

"What cheer?" cried Edward, when within hearing. The well-known voice electrified his friend; he darted forward, tore open the door of the carriage before it ſtopped, and extended his arms the moment it did, ſaying—

"This is an agreeable ſurpriſe indeed; welcome, my dear friend!"—He ſeemed to have forgot his uncle had arrived at the ſame time. Having reached the houſe, the Captain ſaid—

"Upon

"Upon my word, nephew, this is taking uncommon liberties with a Peer of Great-Britain!" adding, "Let me put you more upon your guard, by introducing this young gentleman as Lord Caſtle Cary."

"Lord Caſtle Cary!" repeated William. Then pauſing a few ſeconds, looking his friend full in the face, "What, the ſon of Sir William Montgomery!" he continued with increaſed aſtoniſhment, mingled with joy.

"Why, heyday!" interrupted the uncle, "how came you ſo well acquainted with my boy's origin?"

"Oh, my dear uncle, I begin to gueſs the whole!" cried William, capering about the room.

"Why the boy is mad!" ſaid the Captain.

"I am, uncle, I am mad with joy.—If my dear friend is a Peer, I hope he will, nevertheleſs, honour me with his friendſhip."

"It will be my greateſt pride," replied Edward, heartily ſhaking his hand.—"But how

how is it you bury yourſelf in ſolitude ſo much of late?—You are partial to parading upon the green, becauſe it is in ſight of —— But I muſt not tell tales."

"Out with it!" cried William. "Yes, I acknowledge I ſcarcely exiſt out of the ſight of Mrs Beaver's houſe.—To be bleſſed now and then with a ſight of that lovely girl has of late conſtituted my ſole felicity."

"Well done, Bill!" ſaid the Captain, laughing.—"Pray who is that girl? I have ſeen her, and muſt own I do not think you have a bad choice; but you muſt remember you have got a father to conſult."

"I know it, my dear uncle, and a friend alſo. What ſay you, my Lord?"

"Oh, you have my moſt hearty concurrence," replied Edward.

"I thank you moſt heartily, my Lord!—Perhaps you don't know what you have promiſed. It is Adeline Montgomery who has robbed me of my heart."

"My

"My ſiſter!" exclaimed the aſtoniſhed Edward.

"The ſame," replied William.—"That adorable girl has reſided with her relation, Mrs. Beaver, ſince the death of her mother; and that good old woman has drove me to deſpair by aſſuring me, for I really have had the aſſurance to aſk her permiſſion to pay my addreſſes to her niece, that her family would never conſent to her marrying a tradeſman."

"So then I have ſeen my ſiſter, I find," ſaid Edward. "I muſt try what I can do for you. My father, I am ſure, would not have objected to ſo advantageous a match. However, at preſent ſhe has no one to conſult except a brother, who will never controul her in what her own happineſs ſo much depends on. I have ſome melancholy news to break to her, which ought not to be deferred, for fear ſhe might hear our late victory coſt us the life of a father."

"Allow me, my Lord, to be the bearer of a meſſage from you."

"You

"You are very kind, my dear friend;—but I think, if my benefactor will oblige me ſo far, it will come better from him.—Now I know my deareſt Adeline is ſo near, I ſhall be impatient to ſee and conſole her. I remember her a pleaſing little girl."

While Captain Bloomfield was abſent upon his melancholy embaſſy, Edward entered into a few explanations to his friend; and as William aſſured him he knew Miſs Montgomery would honour him with her hand, if ſanctioned by his concurrence, he was as happy as any mortal could be, who had not attained the full extent of his deſires.—We ſhall not detail the meeting between the brother and ſiſter, which, though melancholy, was not devoid of pleaſure. It would have been indelicate juſt then to enter upon a ſubject her future happineſs depended upon.

The following evening all the Bloomfield family, and the Governor, arrived at Weſton.—The good old man was happy when he

he learned his niece was ſo near, and ſent to invite himſelf, with his nephew, to ſpend an hour with Mrs. Beaver. As Maria and Miſs Montgomery had been friends for ſome time, the former took upon herſelf to conſole the amiable Adeline. Captain Forteſcue's change of name, and acceſſion to wealth and title, afforded no ſmall fund for converſation to the neighbouring families; and his approaching nuptials with Maria was a never-failing topic, as it may be ſuppoſed the Sheriff more than conſented—he rejoiced at the idea of calling a Peer his ſon-in-law.

While the neceſſary preparations were making, his Lordſhip, his uncle, and Captain Bloomfield paid a viſit to Aſhdale, which the Governor reſolved to let, not chuſing to diſpoſe of a family ſeat; particularly as the late Lord Caſtle Cary had a very beautiful ſeat upon the borders of the new foreſt, which was now become the property of our hero, who ſaid he ſhould pitch his tent there during the war; and as his uncle requeſted

requeſted to be his inmate, he did not want Aſhdale.

Suffice it to ſay, at the expiration of three months, the young hero led Maria to the altar, from whence they proceeded immediately to his ſeat in Hampſhire. His ſhip being ordered for Channel ſervice, as he by no means wiſhed to remain idle, he ſoon returned to his duty. As ſoon as Miſs Montgomery was out of mourning, ſhe gave her hand to the young merchant.

Having now brought our hiſtory to a concluſion, we have only to add, that the Bloomfield family were as happy as they could be in the proſpects of their children. The Captain ſaid he had no wiſh left ungratified. If he was not ſpeedily ſent out, he meant to accompany his young friend in his trips. Of the inferior characters, little remains to be ſaid. Alderman Bulford and his daughter had frequent quarrels, blaming each other for the mortifications they daily underwent among their friends; for the ſtile adventure, by ſome means, was

made public, and the young lady in particular did not reliſh the jokes of what ſhe might have been, had ſhe been more clear-ſighted :—but it had one good effect upon both ; in hopes of a ſimilar opportunity of wiping off the ſtain, they grew more charitable. The honeſt oſtler ſucceeded far beyond his expectations, and Samuel bleſſed the hour he beſtowed his penny on his incomparable maſter.

Having therefore puniſhed the wicked, and rewarded the juſt, we hope we have not totally failed in the propoſed end, which was to amuſe a generous and diſcriminating public in the hiſtory of our gallant SAILOR BOY.

FINIS.

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Britiſh Critic, January, 1799.

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Analytical Review, April 1798.

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